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The Mirage or Glowing Sandy Plain. Isaiah xxxv. 7.



Posture at Meals in the East. Luke xiv 16

BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS;
OR,
A DESCRIPTION OF
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
PECULIAR TO THE EAST,
ESPECIALLY
EXPLANATORY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY THE
REV B. H. DRAPER,
Author of "Scripture Stories from the Old and New Testament."

AMERICAN EDITION WITH MANY IMPROVEMENTS.
ILLUSTRATED BY ENGRAVINGS.

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TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

A KNOWLEDGE of the customs and manners of the East is absolutely necessary to a right understanding of the Scriptures. Most persons can recollect, when they were young, how singular and difficult some parts of the Bible appeared, which, from their enlarged information, they now regard as very simple and beautiful.

It was not possible that a volume of this size could include the whole of those customs to which there are manifold allusions in the Sacred Writings; it however comprehends many of the most interesting and instructive, and such as are amply sufficient to prove that the Scriptures are accurate in their representa-

tions, and worthy of respect, even where, at the first sight, the sense does not immediately appear.

It is hoped, that the ensuing pages will be permitted to occupy a place among those useful volumes which the young will be allured to read on the hallowed hours between the intervals of public worship on the Lord's Day ; and that some of the instructors of the rising generation will employ them in their labour as conducive to that variety which is so exceedingly agreeable and necessary to their enlarged success.

SOUTHAMPTON, 1831.

CONTENTS.

	340
	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Eastern Houses	12
Bricks	22
Hospitality	25
Homage	31
Sacrifices	38
Inns	41
Keys	45
Covenants	47
Serpents	49
Wheat, Bread, Food, &c.	54
Ovens	62
Ornaments	64
Rice	69
Eating Flesh	73
Napkins	78
Books and Writing	82
Feasts, and Meals	96
Presents	103

Cattle, Agriculture, and Vineyards	110
Trade and Commerce	120
Music and Poetry	127
The Grecian Games	133
Grinding	137
Tents	141
Climate	145
Fire	146
Bottles	147
Shoes	151
Thrones	155
The Mirage	158
The Simoom	163
Gold	164
Water Spouts	165
Door-ways and Gates	166
Balances	169
Salutation	171
Moloch	174
Garments	176
Threshing	184
Posture	194
Mourning	197
Miscellaneous Subjects	203

INTRODUCTION.

MR. BENYON resided at a handsome country seat on the coast of Hampshire in England. In early life he had been engaged in the busy pursuits of commerce, in the neighborhood of London. These he had now relinquished. His state of health rendered the sea-air necessary to his welfare ; and as his father had left him a considerable fortune, he was well able to give up the profits of trade to those who had more need of them.

And he was as willing to do so, as he was able ; for he was fond of a retired, contemplative life. And especially was this the case, when he had lost his wife, who died after a long illness, leaving a fine little boy to his care. He determined, therefore, to gratify the best wishes of his heart, by devoting his leisure hours to the education of this child. His sentiments on this important subject, were in unison with those of Cow-

per ; when conversing upon this topic, he would often repeat the following lines, with much interest and animation ;—

“ Then why resign into a stranger’s hand
A task so much within your own command,
That God and nature, and your interest too,
Seem with one voice to delegate to you ?
Why hire a lodging in a house unknown,
For one, whose tenderest thoughts all hover round your own ?
This second weaning, needless as it is,
How does it lacerate both your heart and his !
The indented stick, that looses day by day,
Notch after notch, till all are smoothed away,
Bears witness, long ere his dismissal come,
With what intense desire he wants his home ! ”

Thus Mr. Benyon determined to be “ Father, and Friend, and Tutor, all in one ; ” and he was well qualified for the task.

His household was regulated very much in the style of the best of our forefathers. For example, he had a high degree of reverence for the Holy Scriptures ; he believed, with Locke, that they “ have God for their author, salvation for their end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for their matter.” He felt, that the testimony of Sir W. Jones, in reference to the Bible, was well-founded ; “ I have regularly,” said that learned man, “ and attentively read the Holy

Scriptures ; and am of opinion, that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed."

The friends and relatives of Mr. Benyon often visited him in his retirement ; but, whoever might be present, he assembled his household each morning and evening, to hear a portion of the sacred pages, and to offer supplication and thanksgiving to the great source of all good.

Harry was a very sensible boy, and apt to ask questions about every thing. His father encouraged him to do so, as it was one of his principal enjoyments to impart to him that knowledge which, he hoped, by the divine blessing, would make him wise and useful.

This excellent youth often noticed expressions and transactions that appeared singular in those parts of sacred writ, which were daily read in his hearing ; and he did not forget to ask his father to explain what he could not understand ; an example well worthy the imitation of all.

EASTERN HOUSES.

ONE morning, after Mr. Benyon had read to his family the interesting account of the healing of the Paralytic, (Mark ii.) he and Henry walked out to enjoy the cool breeze. It was one of those beautiful spring mornings, when, as Akenside says.

———"All is beauty to the eye.
And music to the ear."

As they were standing at the end of the terrace in the garden, watching the tide gently creeping up in silvery streamlets on the coast, Harry said, "Father; I have been thinking about the poor man, of whom you read this morning; how could they get him to the top of the house, and then let him down before our Lord? Did they take off the roof?"

"I am not surprised, Harry, that the account puz-

Mark ii. 3: And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

Repeat the verses from Mark that relate to the Paralytic What question does Harry ask about letting down the Paralytic?

zled you. I will explain it. There are many other Scriptures which would seem very singular, and for the same reason; that is, because the houses in the East, where the Scriptures were written, are not like those which you see in this country. The houses in Judea were built with flat roofs; and they had battlements around them for safety, according to God's own command, (Deut. xxii. 8.) Hence the people in the East are accustomed to lay flax and linen to dry on the tops of their houses: we read that the spies concealed by Rahab were hid among these. (Joshua ii. 6.) The house-tops were the scenes of social intercourse and friendly conversation; so, we are informed that Samuel and Saul were talking together on the house-top. (1. Sam. ix. 25—6.) At the Feast of Tabernacles, the

Deut. xxii. 8. When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

Joshua ii. 6. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof.

Sam. i. ix. 25. And when they were come down from the

Why do many verses in Scripture seem singular respecting the houses in the East? How were the houses in Judea built? Repeat a verse from Deut. What were the people in the East accustomed to do? What is said in Joshua about the spies? What was done on the house-tops?

people were accustomed to make 'themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts.' The prophet Jeremiah tells us, that the Israelites sometimes offered incense to their idols on the roofs of their houses." (Jer. xxxii. 29.)

"And Peter, you know, father, went up to the roof at the house-top to pray." (Acts x. 9.)

"True, Harry. And Isaiah speaks of the inhabitants of a city having gone up 'to the house tops.' Houses in the East are built 'with a court within, in high place to the city, Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the house.

26. And they rose early ; and it came to pass about the spring of the day, that Samuel called Saul to the top of the house, saying, Up, that I may send thee away. And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel abroad.'

Jer. xxxii. 29. And the Chaldeans that fight against this city, shall come and set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods to provoke me to anger.

Acts x. 9. On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the house-top to pray about the sixth hour.

Repeat ~~the~~ verses from Samuel. What was done at the Feast of the Tabernacles ? What does the prophet Jeremiah tell us ? Repeat a verse from Jeremiah. What is said in Acts concerning Peter ? What does Isaiah say ? How are houses built in the East ?

to which, chiefly, the windows open ; those which open to the street are so obstructed with lattice-work, that no one, either without or within, can see through them. Whenever, therefore, any thing is to be seen or heard in the streets, any remarkable spectacle, or any alarm of a public nature, every one immediately goes up to the house-top, to satisfy his curiosity. In the same manner, when any one had occasion to make any thing public, the readiest and most effectual way of doing it was to proclaim it to the people from the house tops. The people all running to the roofs of the houses, is a lively image of a sudden general alarm.*

“ Dr. Pocock tells us in his *Travels*, that when he was at Tiberias in Galilee, he was entertained by the chief's steward (as the chief himself was particularly engaged) ; and that, for coolness, they supped on the top of the house, according to their custom, and lodged there likewise, in a sort of closet about eight feet square, of wicker-work, plastered round towards the bottom. but without any door, each person having his separate apartment.

What do the people do if any thing remarkable is to be seen or heard in the streets ? Where was a proclamation generally made to the people ? What presents a lively image of alarm in the East ? What does Dr. Pocock say in his travels ?

* Bishop Lowth.

"A more recent traveller informs us, that when in the East he often slept on the house-tops. 'We found,' says he, 'this way of sleeping extremely agreeable, as we by this means enjoyed the cool air, without any other covering than the canopy of the heavens, which presents itself in pleasing forms on every interruption of rest, when silence and solitude strongly dispose the mind to contemplation.' Mr. Barker, our Consul at Aleppo, was sleeping at the top of the house when the late earthquake happened; and from thence he descended into the street, without passing through the house. So, you see, houses in the East had often stairs, or fixed ladders, on the outside; and for the convenience of going up and down within-side of the house, they had often a trap-door, or a lattice, with a covering, on the flat of the roof.

"Dr. Shaw thinks that the expressions of the Evangelist, they let the paralytic down 'in the midst,' mean the court-yard round about which the house was built, and that Our Lord was preaching there. He supposes that the bearers of the paralytic might carry him up the stairs, which commonly went from the gateway, and having got to the flat roof, might take down

What does a more recent traveller tell us? What happened to Mr. Barker? How did he descend into the street? What conveniences have the houses in the East? What does Dr. Shaw think is meant in the Scriptures by 'the midst'? How does he suppose that the man sick of the palsy was let down? *

inwards a part of the balustrade or parapet wall, and so let down the bed with cords by the side of the glazed and perhaps painted tiles, which might beautify the walls of the house towards this court."

"They could easily get on such a house, father, and so let the poor man down 'in the midst.'"

"Truly, they could; and you see how plain and natural the history now appears to you, though this morning it seemed so singular and strange.

"Houses in the East are built of various materials; some are formed of stone or brick; but those of the poor are commonly of wood or of mud. The heat often cracks the walls which are formed of the latter material, and serpents frequently find a shelter in them. To this the prophet alludes where he says: 'As if a man went into his house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.'"

"It is said in the Gospels, that our Lord's disciples prepared an 'upper room' in which they might celebrate the Passover. These, with us, are regarded as the meanest parts of the habitation; but this is not the case in the East; even to the present day, the upper rooms are valued as the principal apartments."

Of what materials are the houses of the East built? How do serpents find their way into the houses? What does the Prophet Amos say respecting serpents? In what part of the house did the disciples celebrate the Lord's supper? How is the upper part of a house regarded with us? How are upper rooms valued in the East?

“Was their furniture, father, similar to our’s?”

“Certainly not, Harry. The walls of their rooms were often adorned with beautiful hangings of cloth, or silk of different colours, and the ceilings of their best mansions were sometimes painted, or gilt, or carved. This is alluded to in Jer. xxii. 14. Hag. i. 4.

“The floors of the dwellings of the rich are usually of tiles or plaster, and are covered with fine carpets. Mattresses and cushions are placed by the sides of the walls, on which any one may recline: these are referred to in Amos, vi. 4. Thus, also, we are told that Hezekiah, resting on his mattress or couch, turned his face from his attendants towards the wall when he prayed, 2 Kings, xx. 2.

Jer. xxii. 14. That saith, I will build me a wide house, and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermillion.

Hag. i. 4. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste.

Amos vi. 4. That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches.

Kings 2. xx. 2. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord.

How were the walls and ceilings of rooms adorned? Repeat the verses from Jer. and Hag. How are the floors of the best houses made, and with what are they covered? What are placed by the sides of the walls? Repeat a verse from Amos. What are we told of Hezekiah? Repeat a verse from Kings, concerning him.

“Chairs are not used by the people in the East. They usually sit on couches, or carpets, or on skins. These also commonly serve them to sleep on, whilst they cover themselves with their garments. For this reason, a man was commanded to return the garment he had borrowed before night.—(Exod. xxii. 26. Deut. xxiv. 12.)

“The furniture of the prophet’s chamber (mentioned, 2 Kings, iv. 10.) consisted only of a bed, which was most likely a sort of mattress on the floor, and ‘a table, a stool, and a candlestick.’”

“But to return to the structure of buildings. Some houses mentioned in Scripture seem to have been of a very peculiar construction ; such must have been

Exodus, xxii. 26. If thou at all take thy neighbor’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him, by that the sun goeth down.

Deut. xxiv. 12. And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge.

Kings 2. iv. 10. Let us make a little chamber I pray thee, on the wall ; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.

What do the people in the East use to sit upon instead of chairs ? What do they sleep upon ? How do they cover themselves ? What was a man commanded to do with a borrowed garment ? Repeat the verses from Exodus and Deut. Of what did the furniture of the prophet’s room consist ? Repeat a verse from Kings. What is said of the structure of buildings in the Scriptures ?

the building which Samson pulled down on himself and his foes. 'In considering what this fabric was,' says Sir Christopher Wren, 'that could at one pull be demolished, I conceive it was an oval amphitheatre, the scene in the middle, where a vast roof of cedar beams, resting round upon the walls, centered all upon one short architrave that united two cedar pillars in the middle. The pillar would not be sufficient to unite the ends of at least one hundred beams, that tended to the centre ; therefore, I say, there must be a short architrave resting upon two pillars, upon which all the beams tending to the centre of the amphitheatre might be supported. Now, if Samson by his miraculous strength, pressing upon one of those pillars, moved it from its basis, the whole roof must of necessity fall.'

" Dr. Shaw observes on this subject, that ' the Eastern method of building may assist us in accounting for the particular structure of the temple or house of Dagon, and the great number of people who were buried in the ruins of it, by the pulling down of the two principal pillars. We read that there was a multitude of persons on the roof beholding while Samson made sport ; Samson must therefore have been in a court

How must the house which Samson pulled down have been built ? What does Dr. Shaw observe on this subject ?



below them. Several palaces and courts of justice in the East are built in such a way, that on their festivals and rejoicings a great quantity of sand is strewed upon the area for the wrestlers to fall upon, whilst the roof of the cloisters round about is covered with spectators. I have often seen several hundreds of people diverted in this manner on the roof of the Dey's palace at Algiers, which, like many more of the same quality and denomination, hath an advanced cloister over against the gate of the palace, made in the fashion of a large penthouse, supported only by one or two contiguous pillars in the front, or else in the centre. In such open structures as these, in the midst of the guards and councillors, are the bashaws and other great officers assembled to distribute justice and transact the public affairs of their provinces. Here likewise they have their public entertainments, as the lords and others of the Philistines had in the house of Dagon. Upon the supposition therefore that in the house of Dagon there was a cloistered structure of this kind, the pulling down of the front or centre pillars only, which supported it, would be attended with the like catastrophe to the Philistines."

How are the palaces and courts of justice built in the East? Where do the Bashaws and other officers assemble to distribute justice? Where do they have public entertainments?

BRICKS.

"PRAY, father, did you ever observe the brickmakers, on the side of the hill, just as you come into the village?"

"Yes, Harry; I have often stood for a few moments, to remark with how much diligence and cheerfulness they labour."

"What hard and dirty employment it is! I am sure I should not like it."

"We are not always to have just what we like, Harry. You would have liked, the other day, to have ridden the bay pony; but I knew you could not manage him; and perhaps had I indulged you in your wishes, you might have been thrown off and killed. You see, the brickmakers do not think their work any hardship; they seem very happy. It is a ground of thankfulness to a poor labourer, that he has plenty of profitable employment. And it is very pleasant to a benevolent mind, to observe, that such persons, though engaged in hard labour, seem to have as much enjoyment of life as ourselves. The good God has more equally diffused felicity among his creatures, than we are sometimes apt to imagine."

"But, father, I looked at them, to see if they used

Do those who work hard appear to enjoy life?

any straw ; you know, it is said that Pharaoh commanded the children of Israel to make bricks without straw, and that this was a great hardship."

"So it was, Harry, on many accounts, which I cannot mention now. But the bricks in Egypt were somewhat different from ours. A quantity of straw was usually mingled with the clay."

"I can't think of what use it could be, father."

"I will tell you, Harry, somewhat about it. Do you recollect the command which Pharaoh gave to the task-masters whom he set over the children of Israel?"

"Yes ; he said, 'Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick as heretofore : let them go and gather straw for themselves.'"

"Well ; this was a plain proof that straw was then employed in making bricks. The Scripture account is confirmed by the statements of travellers. 'The eastern bricks,' says Sir John Chardin, 'are only clay well moistened with water, mixed with straw, and dried in the sun.' So, it seems, that walls built with them would be little better than those built with beat-

How did Pharaoh command the children of Israel to make bricks ? How were bricks made in Egypt ? What command did Pharaoh give to the task masters ? What does this command prove ? What are Eastern bricks made of ?

en earth, or mud, among ourselves. Dr. Shaw tells us, that some of the Egyptian pyramids are made of brick, the composition whereof is only a mixture of clay, mud, and straw mixed up together, and afterwards baked in the sun. 'The straw which keeps these bricks together,' he adds, 'and which still preserves its original colour, seems to be a proof that these bricks were never burnt, or made in kilns.'

"Another traveller, speaking of Cairo in Egypt, says, 'that the houses, for the most part are of bricks, which are only hardened by the heat of the sun, and mixed with straw to make them firm.' The Chinese, also, use much straw in making their bricks."

"How much these accounts explain Scripture !"

"They do, Harry ; but they not only explain it,—they also prove the truth of it."

"But did you ever see any of these bricks, yourself ?"

"Yes ; many have been brought to England by travellers, and are preserved in cabinets as curiosities."

"And did the Israelites make bricks to build the pyramids ?"

Of what are the bricks made of which some of the Egyptian pyramids are made ? What does Dr. Shaw say of the straw which keeps the bricks together ? How are the houses built at Cairo ? Do the Chinese use straw ? Have any of these bricks been seen at the present time ? Did the Israelites make bricks to build the pyramids ?

"It is not unlikely but that such was the case ; at least, in reference to some of them."

"What hard work it must have been !"

"It must indeed have been a laborious occupation, especially to the Israelites, who were slaves ; and indeed as you see it now is, Harry. Yet, you may observe, that, as the persons are used to it, they do not find it unpleasant ; and, as they are not slaves, but are rewarded for their efforts, they do not feel them to be a burden. If Divine Providence has given us an easier task in life than others, we should be thankful ; yet, we should never think any thing beneath us, which is our evident duty, and by which we may be useful to our fellow creatures."

HOSPITALITY.

"In the chapter which you read this morning, my dear father, we are told how readily Abraham received the three men who came to talk with him, and how willingly he made an entertainment for them."

"It is true : let us read the passage again ; it is a fine picture of hospitality in the earlier periods of the

Was it a laborious occupation ? Were the Israelites slaves ? Repeat the Scripture story of Abraham and the three men.

world. The sacred historian tells us, that, as 'he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day, he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo! three men stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant; let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on. And they said, So do as thou hast said.'

“And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.’

“And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it to a young man, and he hastened to dress it. And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.”

“It would be very unpleasant now to have one's feet washed, the first thing, when we go into a friend's house,—would it not, father?”

“Perhaps it would be inconvenient, to say the least, to most of us. But in the East, one of the first kind-

nesses to strangers is to wash their feet. That the custom is very ancient, is evident, because several instances of it are mentioned in the *Odyssey*—Homer says :

“ By God the stranger, and the poor are sent,
And what to those we give to Him is lent ;
Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs,
Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams.
Your other task, ye menial tribe, forbear ;
Now wash the stranger, and the bed prepare !”

“ I scarcely think, father, that any one would now do as Abraham did.”

“ There is not the same occasion now, Harry, as then, for hospitality to travellers, except in some countries, where there are few, if any inns, or houses, appropriated to the accommodation of travellers.”

“ But we read of it many times in the Bible ; so it must then have been common.”

“ True, Harry ; and, ‘ Be not forgetful to entertain strangers,’ is a precept of the New Testament. Kindness to strangers seems a part of that universal benevolence which the divinely simple and beautiful religion of the Bible inculcates.”

“ Was any thing like this hospitality ever practised in our own country ?”

What is the first kindness performed to strangers in the East ? Is the washing of feet an ancient custom ? What does Homer say of it ? What precept is there in the New Testament, concerning the treatment of strangers ?

“Yes, Harry ; the word LORD is a contraction of the Anglo-Saxon word HLAford ; from HLAf, *bread*, or *loaf* ; and FORD, to *supply* or *give out* ; the term Lord, therefore, means, the giver of bread. Hence, English noblemen are called lords, because they all used to keep open houses, into which strangers and vassals might enter and eat as much as they chose ; on this account they were called *Lords*, or *Givers of bread*. Some of the most ancient families still keep up this custom.”

“Well, I never knew what the term *Lord* meant before. I shall always recollect its meaning ; it is so pleasing.”

“The narrations of travellers abound in specimens of hospitality, which they have met with in the Eastern part of the world. Tavernier says, ‘When we were not above a musket-shot from Anna, a fine old man came up to me, and took my horse by the bridle ; ‘Friend,’ said he, ‘come and wash thy feet, and eat bread at my house. Thou art a stranger ; and since I have met thee on the road, do not refuse the favour I desire of thee.’ We could not but go along with him to his house, where he feasted us the best manner

Of what is the word Lord a contraction ? What is the meaning of the Saxon word Hlaford ? Why are English noblemen called Lords ? What instance does Tavernier give of Eastern hospitality ?

he could ; and not only provided for us, but also for our horses.'

" 'When a stranger approaches an Arab village,' says La Roque, 'he signifies to the chief, that he wants a supper and lodging ; and he confers on him all that he wants. But often, as soon as the people see a stranger advancing, they go out to meet him ; if he wishes for refreshment, and then to go forward, he stays under some tree, and they bring him eggs, butter, curds, honey, olives, or fruit, either fresh or dried.'

" 'Whoever presents himself at their door,' says Volney, referring to the Druses, 'in the quality of a suppliant, or a passenger, is sure of being entertained with lodging and food in the most generous and unaffected manner. I have often seen the lowest peasants give the last morsel of bread they had in their houses to the hungry traveller. When they have once contracted with their guest the sacred engagement of bread and salt, no subsequent event can make them violate it.'

" 'Nothing,' says Elphinstone, in his account of the kingdom of Caubul, 'could exceed the civility of the country people ; we were often invited into gardens, and were welcomed in every village by almost every

What does La Roque say of Arabian hospitality ? What does Volney relate of the Druses ? How did the people of Caubul treat Elphinstone ?

man that saw us. Sometimes they would lay hold of our bridles, and not permit us to pass, till we had promised to breakfast with them on some future day, and confirmed the promise by putting our hands between theirs."

"Did you say, father, that the people in the East make an engagement with strangers with bread and salt?"

"Yes; salt was often regarded as the emblem of friendship and fidelity: hence it was mixed with their sacrifices and covenants.

"The divine Author of Christianity expects from his disciples universal benevolence; and they all exemplify it, who are really what they profess to be. Hence, at the day of final reckoning, he has told us, that he will say to them, 'I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

"You often say that nothing is lost by kindness."

"True, Harry; and I do think that this is the case:

How was salt regarded by the people of the East? What does Christ expect from his disciples? What will he say to them at the last day?

it may be laid down as a general rule. He who shows kindness to his fellow creatures, is sure to be repaid with kindness. The measure we mete to others, is very often, even in the present world, 'measured to us again.' And every benevolent individual has an immediate, and a most gratifying reward in his own bosom."

HOMAGE.

"How low that man bowed to you, father!"

"He did, Harry; though I never wish people to do so; but when they do, I think it my duty carefully to return their courtesy."

"Yes, I took notice; you bowed almost as low as he did; and the man was but a labourer, was he?"

"I believe not, Harry. Henry the Fourth of France,—who, by the way, was by far the best of the French kings,—was standing one day, with some of his courtiers, at the entrance of a village, and a poor man, passing by, bowed down to the very ground; and the king with great condescension, returned his salutation just in the same manner; at which one of his

Will those be repaid who show kindness to their fellow creatures? Relate the anecdote of Henry the Fourth.

attendants ventured to express his surprise, when the monarch finely replied to him,—“Would you have your king exceeded in politeness by one of the lowest of his subjects?”

“The Scriptures frequently mention acts of homage, which are not common among us.”

“True, Harry ; yet they are still common in the East ; though, I think, their manners in this respect are not to be commended. Such humiliation as is there required by the great men from their inferiors is evidently improper from man to man ; we ought thus to humble ourselves before God, but not before our fellow-creatures. A free people will approach their sovereign with heartfelt respect and esteem, but not as if they were his abject slaves. Though the individual upon a throne be adorned with royal magnificence, he is still but a man ; and no one ought to approach him in the same way that he would enter into the presence of the Divine Majesty.”

“Will you mention some of the instances in the Scripture which show the manner of the Eastern homage ?”

“There are many, Harry. When Joseph’s brethren came before him, ‘they bowed down themselves be-

Is homage common in the East ? Is it to be commended ? Before whom ought we to humble ourselves. How ought a sovereign to be approached ?

fore him with their faces to the earth.' When a servant had a favour to beg, Our Lord represents him as falling down at his Master's feet ; and the inferior servant as falling down before him who was in a higher station. So the Syrophenician woman fell down at the feet of our Lord. Thus the Prophet Isaiah represents the nations of the earth as coming, with all humility and gratitude, into the Church of God. 'With their faces to the earth,' he says, 'they shall bow down to thee, and shall lick the dust off thy feet.' And in the 72nd Psalm it is predicted that the enemies of Messiah 'shall lick the dust.' These expressions evidently are descriptive of deep humiliation."

"I recollect, in that account which you lent me of Hugh Boyd's embassy to Ceylon, he says, that when he was called to visit the king, he knelt before him ; but he adds, 'My companions almost literally licked the dust ; prostrating themselves with their faces almost close to the stone floor, and throwing out their arms and legs ; then, rising on their knees, they repeated, in a very loud voice, a certain form of words of the most extravagant kind that can be conceived ; such as that the head of this king of kings might reach

Mention some instances which show the manner of Eastern homage. What does Hugh Boyd say of his visit to the King of Ceylon ?

beyond the sun ; that he might live a thousand years,' &c. What nonsense, father !”

“ Nonsense indeed, Harry. The Persian monarchs never admitted any one into their presence who did not perform this act of adoration. Alexander, when he had conquered Asia, was so vain of his achievements, that he too would be revered after the manner of the gods. His attendants, and those who came to converse with him, prostrated themselves before him. Mr. Harmer, from D’Herbelot, mentions a remarkable instance of the submission of a conquered prince to an Eastern monarch. ‘This prince threw himself one day on the ground, and kissed the prints that his victorious enemy’s horse had made there ; reciting some verses in Persian which he had composed.

“ ‘ *The mark that the foot of your horse has left upon the dust, serves me now for a crown.*

“ ‘ *The ring, which I wear as the badge of my slavery, is become my richest ornament.*

“ ‘ *While I shall have the happiness to kiss the dust from your feet, I shall think, that fortune favours me with its tenderest caresses and sweetest kisses.*’ ”

“ What a slave he must have been, father !”

What did the Persian monarchs exact from those admitted into their presence ? What did Alexander require when he had conquered Asia ? What does Mr. Harmer relate ? Repeat the verses composed by the conquered prince.

"Surely he was ; but much allowance must be made for the difference in our manners and theirs. It is only a few days since, that I was reading an account of an audience which the American missionaries had with the Emperor of Burmah ; it strongly proves that the revolution of centuries has made but little change in the manners of the Eastern world. They took as a present to his Majesty the Bible, in six volumes, covered with gold leaf, and each volume enclosed in a rich wrapper. When they got to Ava, they petitioned to behold ' the *golden face*.'"

"Golden face ! father !"

"Yes, the face of the Emperor is called *golden*—his feet are called *golden*, and, indeed, every thing pertaining to him is called *golden*. 'At the outer court,' say they, 'we were detained a long time, until the various officers were satisfied that we had a right to enter ; after which we deposited a present for the private minister of state, and were ushered into his apartments in the palace yard. He received us very pleasantly, and ordered us to sit before several governors and petty kings, who were waiting at his levee. Some one now announced that the *golden foot* was about to ad-

Has much change taken place in the manners of the Eastern world ? What did the American missionaries take to the Emperor of Burmah ? What did they ask to see ? Who is said to have a golden face and golden feet ? Relate the account of the presentation of the missionaries to the Emperor of Burmah.

vance ; on which, the minister hastily rose up, and put on his robes of state, saying that he must seize the moment to present us to the Emperor. He conducted us through various apartments of splendour and parade, until we ascended a flight of stairs, and entered a most magnificent hall. He directed us where to sit ; and taking his place on one side, had the present deposited on the other. The scene to which we were now introduced really surpassed our expectation. The spacious extent of the hall, the number and magnitude of the pillars, the height of the dome, the whole completely covered with gold, presented a most grand and imposing spectacle. Very few were present, and those evidently great officers of state. We remained about five minutes, when every one put himself into the most respectful attitude, and the chief minister whispered that his Majesty had entered. We looked through the hall, as far as the pillars would allow, and presently caught a glimpse of him. He came forward, unattended, in solitary grandeur, exhibiting the proud gait and majesty of an Eastern monarch. His dress was rich, but not distinctive ; and he carried in his hand the gold-sheathed sword, which seems to have taken the place of the sceptre of ancient times. But it was his high aspect and commanding eye that chiefly riveted our attention. He strided on ; every head,

excepting ours, was now in the dust. He sat down on an elevated seat, his hand resting on the hilt of his sword, and his eyes intently fixed on us : then the minister presented our petition ; and, in a few moments said to us, ‘ In regard to the objects of your petition, his Majesty gives no order. In regard to your sacred books, his Majesty has no use for them ; take them away.’ ”

“ It is an interesting account, father ; but the subjects of the Emperor of Burmah must be all slaves ; are they not ? ”

“ Indeed they are, Harry. Christianity, whilst it teaches us to ‘ fear God and to honour the king,’ discountenances the idolatrous regard of one creature by another. When Peter came to visit Cornelius, he threw himself at the Apostle’s feet ; but Peter nobly said to him, ‘ Stand up ; I myself also am a man ! ’ ”

“ It is a delightful thought, that the greatest Being in the universe,—the only Being properly so called—He who is enthroned above all might, majesty, and dominion, by whose power all creation is upheld every moment, and by whose smile it is made happy, is infinite in His condescension ; though the Heavens are

What does Christianity teach us ? What does it discountenance ? What did Peter say to Cornelius ? What reflections are delightful with respect to the Supreme Being ?

His throne, and the earth is His footstool, He has declared, that He will look to that man with complacency, and take up His abode with him, who is of a humble and of a contrite heart, and who trembleth at His word. Indeed, 'not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Heavenly Father.' "

SACRIFICES.

" ABEL, it is said, brought of the firstlings of his flock to God ; did he sacrifice them, father ?"

" No doubt but that was the case."

" But God did not bid him do so."

" There is indeed no express command to him to this effect. But when man became a rebel against his Maker, it is evident that, by divine appointment, he was to approach Him with sacrifices. If God had not directed him to do so, it can scarcely be imagined that he would ever have thought of it himself. The skins with which the Almighty clothed our first parents, it is thought by most learned men, and with the greatest

What did Abel bring unto the Lord ? Was man directed by God to offer sacrifices ? What is supposed of the skins that clothed our first parents ?

probability, were from beasts which were offered in sacrifice."

"But why were sacrifices instituted?"

"It was to remind men continually that they had sinned against God, and so deserved to die, like the victim which they were directed to offer; and that, as the sacrifice was accepted, so the sinner should be approved and pardoned through faith in that one great sacrifice, which, in the fulness of time, was to be made for the sins of men. You know who it was that was thus sacrificed, Harry. It is said of Him by the prophet Isaiah, that 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and that by His stripes we are healed.' And the Apostle declares, that, 'He bare our sins in His own body on the tree.'"

"You refer, my dear father, to the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"I do so. There does not seem any thing in the appointment of sacrifices worthy of the wisdom of God, unless this was the case."

"But sacrifices were not confined to the Jews."

"True, they were not,—they were common among the Gentiles, who, as well as the Jews, received them

Why were sacrifices instituted? What great sacrifices was made for the sins of men? What does the prophet Isaiah say of our Lord? Were sacrifices confined to the Jews?

from Noah, the second father of the human race, who offered a burnt sacrifice to God on leaving the ark, which was accepted. They were always offered in the way of atonement, to appease the anger of God, and in the stead of the person or persons who offered ; hence it is evident that they had their origin in the appointment of the Most High ; for had not the institution been divine, the sacrifice could not have been efficacious."

"Do you recollect any instance in profane history, in which offerings were made of victims, similar to the sacrifice of Abel?"

"Homer and Virgil often speak of victims, being offered to propitiate or appease the gods."

"They do ; and the ancient Goths believed that the effusion of the blood of animals appeased the anger of their deities, and that their justice turned aside upon the victims those strokes which were destined for men. And as they imagined that the influence of the sacrifice would be in proportion to the value of the victim, they devoted human beings to bleed upon their altars."*

"And, father, do you not recollect that Rollin tells

Why did they sacrifice human beings ? When did Noah offer sacrifices to God ? How were sacrifices offered ?

* Mallet's North. Antiq. vol. i. p. 7.

us, in his history of the Carthaginians, that when the state was in great danger, they offered two hundred children of the best families to their god Saturn ?”

“ Yes, I well recollect it. How thankful ought we to be that we need no other offering than that which God himself has provided ! ‘ By this one offering,’ says the Apostle Paul, referring to the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, ‘ He hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified.’ ”*

INNS.

“ I think, father, you said, the other day, that there were no inns in the East ?”

“ No, Harry ; you must have mistaken me. I said, if I recollect rightly, that there were no inns such as there are in our country.”

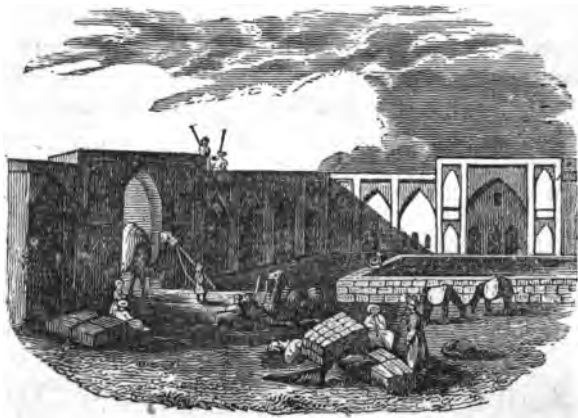
“ But it is said, in Gen. xliii. 21. that Joseph’s brethren, when they came to the Inn, found their money in

What sacrifice did the Carthaginians offer to Saturn ? What does the Apostle say ? Are there any inns in the East ? Are they like those in our country ? Where is mention made of inns in the Scriptures ?

* Vide Magee on the Atonement, *passim*.

their sacks ; and in the second chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, we are told, that there was no room for the infant Saviour and his parents in the Inn."

"You are right, Harry ; but still, it is true, that the



inns in the East were and are very different from ours. They are called *caravanseras* ; and are of different kinds. Some are simply resting-places by the side of a fountain ; others consist of bare walls, which afford temporary shelter from wind or rain. Many, especially those in large towns, are square buildings, with a court

What are the inns in the East called ? Describe the different kinds of *caravanseras*.

in the middle, encompassed with galleries and chambers all round, in which travellers may lodge; but even these contain no furniture. It was most likely at such an inn, which was all pre-occupied, that the Lord of life and glory came into our world."

"And are the Eastern caravanseras still the same sort of inns?"

"I believe they are, Harry. Campbell tells us, that 'such are built at proper distances through the roads of the Turkish dominions. In general, they are formed of solid and durable materials; they have commonly one story above the ground-floor, the lower of which is arched, and serves for warehouses to store goods, for lodgings, and for stables, whilst the upper is used merely for lodgings; besides which, they are always provided with a fountain, and have cooks' shops, and other conveniences, to supply the want of lodgers. In Aleppo, the caravanseras are almost exclusively occupied by merchants, to whom they are let, like houses."

"Well, are not they like our inns, somewhat at least?"

"The far greater part are by no means so good as those described by Mr. Campbell. Volney says, speaking

What is likely concerning our Lord? How are the Eastern inns built at the present day? What of those of Aleppo?

of the East : ' There are no inns any where, excepting a caravansera for travellers near villages and towns. These consist of four wings round a square court, which serves by way of enclosure for beasts of burden. The lodgings are cells, where you find nothing but bare walls, dust, and sometimes scorpions. The keeper gives the traveller a key and a mat, and he provides himself the rest. He must therefore carry with him his bed, his kitchen utensils, and even his provisions, for frequently not even bread is to be found in the villages."

" These are very different from ours, indeed !"

" Truly they are. Tavernier says, ' The caravanse-
ras, or Eastern inns, are very different from ours ; for they are neither so convenient nor so handsome : they are built square, much like cloisters, being usually but one story high, for it is rare to see one of two stories. A wide gate brings you into the court, and in the midst of the building, in the front, and upon the right and left hand, is a hall for persons of the best quality to associate together. On each side of the hall are lodgings for every man by himself. These lodgings are raised all along the court, two or three steps high ;

How does Volney describe the Eastern inns ? What must a traveller carry with him ? What does Tavernier say of the Caravanseras ?

just behind which are the stables, where, many times, the accommodations are as good as in the chambers. Right against the head of every horse there is a niche, with a window into the lodging chamber, through which every man may see that his horse is properly looked after. These niches are usually so large, that three men may lie in them, and here the servants usually dress their victuals.' You see, Harry, it is as I told you ; their inns are very unlike ours. How thankful ought we to be for the admirable accommodations of more civilized society !

KEYS.

" Did you notice, father, what was said in my Greek lesson, this morning, about the key ?"

" Yes, Harry ; I think the piece was from the twenty-first book of Homer's *Odyssey* ; and the key you refer to was that of the store-house of Ulysses."

" But, I mean, did you observe what was said of the shape of it ?"

" Yes, I think Homer calls it by a term which signifies, ' of a large curvature.' The critics say, it was in

What is said of the key mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey* ?

shape like a reaping-hook. It was made of brass, but the handle was of ivory ; though the locks and keys in the East are very commonly made of wood."

"Is there any reference to this kind of key in the Bible?"

"Yes, in the prophecies of Isaiah, God is represented as saying of a distinguished individual ; 'I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder.'"

"A key, father, in the shape of a reaping hook, might be laid easily on the shoulder, as I have seen the reapers thus often place their sickles. But it would be very strange if any one should talk of hanging any of the keys which we use upon the shoulder."

"True, Harry ; and hence you see the great importance of the knowledge of Eastern customs to a right understanding of the Scriptures. The language, as used by the Prophet, is figurative. The key is an ensign of power. Thus Our Lord says of himself, that He hath 'the key of David :' that He 'openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth.' This plainly implies that His power in the invisible world is unlimited. This doctrine accords with his own declaration to his disciples after He arose from the

What is said of a key in the prophecies of Isaiah ? What was probably the shape of the key ? Of what is a key the ensign in the Scriptures ?

dead ; 'All power, said He, 'is given to me in heaven and on earth.' How delightful to the real Christian is the consideration, that He who loves him with an infinite affection—yea, who has given Himself to die upon the cross for him, has in His hands 'the keys of the invisible worlds, and of death ;' * and that He has engaged to 'open the kingdom of Heaven to all believers.'

COVENANTS.

When God made a covenant, or an agreement, with the Patriarch Abraham, he bade him take a heifer, and a she-goat, and a ram, and divide them in the midst, and lay each piece one against the other. Gen. xv. 9. 10. Now here is the usual mode of making

Gen. xv. 9. And he said unto him, take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove and a young pigeon.

10. And he took unto him all these and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another ; but the birds divided he not.

What does our Lord say of himself ? What is implied by the words of our Lord ? What declaration did Jesus make to his disciples after he arose from the dead ? What consideration is delightful to the real Christian ? What did God bid Abraham to do ? Repeat the verses from Gen.

* So Dr. Doddridge renders Rev. i. 18.

treaties or engagements in the East. A Jewish writer says, 'that it was a custom with those who entered into covenant with each other to take a heifer, and cut it in two, and then the contracting parties passed between the pieces.'

"For what did they do this, father?"

"No doubt, to intimate that if they were unfaithful to their engagements, they would be willing to be thus cut asunder, or to perish. Thus the Prophet Jeremiah represents the Almighty as saying, that He would give those into the hands of their enemies, who had transgressed his covenant which they had made before him, 'when,' he says, 'they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.'"

"But did not you say, that God made a covenant with Abraham? It does not tell us, in that chapter, that God went between the pieces of the animals, does it?"

"Not in so many words; but that which was equivalent to it took place. It is said, in the seventeenth verse, 'When the sun went down, and it was dark,' that 'a burning lamp passed between those pieces:' this was, no doubt, an expressive symbol of God's

What does a Jewish writer say of covenants? What was meant by it? What does the Prophet Jeremiah represent the Almighty as saying? What is said in the 17th verse of Gen.?

presence. As a sacred writer expresses it, 'God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.' "

SERPENTS.

"What a large snake here is!" said Harry to his father, just as he passed through the gate into the orchard; "but it is dead, and I am not afraid of it now."

"It does not seem to have been long killed. If it had been alive, Harry, I hope you would have been more of a man than to be afraid of it. Snakes are harmless, and they always get away as fast as they can from any human being."

"But I don't like to see them; though the colours of the skin are beautiful."

"There certainly is in man, Harry, a general enmity to the whole race of serpents, which one scarcely knows how to account for, without thinking of the sad history in the third chapter of Genesis. 'The enmity,' says an excellent American writer,* 'which has

What does a sacred writer say of God? Why does man feel an enmity towards serpents? What does Dr. Dwight say of this enmity?

* Dr. Dwight.

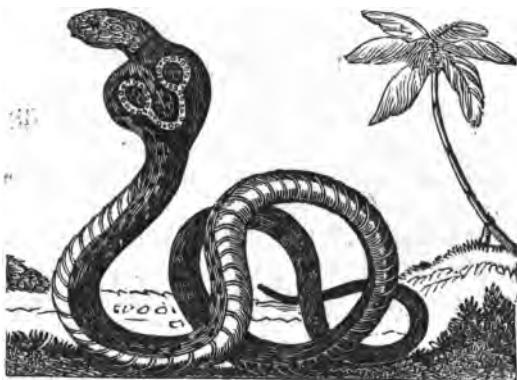
existed between mankind and the seed of the serpent has been, to the latter, a source of innumerable evils. Animals of this kind have ever been peculiarly hated and haunted, attacked and destroyed from the beginning. A war of extermination has plainly been declared against them, and carried on through all ages with unceasing animosity. In consequence of this hostility, millions of them have probably perished. And not a small number of the human race have fallen victims to those venomous creatures, and been wounded in the heel, the very part mentioned in the third chapter of Genesis."

"Is there any passage in the Scriptures which refers to serpents capable of illustration from Eastern customs?"

"Yes, Harry; there is one especially in the fifty-eighth Psalm, in which the writer says of the wicked, that 'they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears; which will not harken to the voice of charmers, charm he never so wisely.' Here seems to be a very evident allusion to a practice which is still common in the East. The cobra de capella, or hooded snake, is a large and beautiful serpent, but one of the most venomous; its bite generally proves mortal in less than an

What is said of the wicked in the 57th Psalm? Describe the hooded Snake.

hour. It contracts, or enlarges its hood at pleasure. The centre of the hood is marked in black and white,



like a pair of spectacles ; on which account it is called the spectacle snake.

“Of this kind are the dancing snakes, which are carried in baskets through Hindoostan, and procure a maintenance for a set of people, who play a few simple notes on the flute, with which the snakes seem much delighted, and keep time by a graceful motion of the head ; erecting about half their length from the ground, and following the music with gentle curves,

How are the dancing snakes affected by music ?

like the undulating lines of the swan's neck. It is a well-attested fact, that when a house is infested by snakes of this kind, which destroy poultry and small domestic animals, the musicians are sent for, who, by playing on a flageolet, find out their hiding places, and charm them to destruction ; for, no sooner do the snakes hear the music, than they come softly from their retreat, and are easily taken."

"What a surprising account this is ! But do not the people sometimes get bitten ?"

"I will tell you. When the music ceases, the snakes appear motionless ; but if not immediately covered up in the basket, the spectators are liable to fatal accidents."

"What, do they ever bite any body ? If they do, I should rather not see them dance."

"I will tell you. 'Among my drawings,' says Forbes in his Oriental Memoirs, 'is that of a cobra de capella, which danced for an hour on the table while I painted it ; during which I frequently handled it, to observe the beauty of the spots, and especially the spectacles on the hood, not doubting but that its venomous fangs had been previously extracted. But the

What is a well attested fact ? What happens if the snakes are not covered up when the music ceases ? What account does Forbes give of a hooded snake ?

next morning, my upper servant came to me in great haste, and desired that I would instantly retire, and praise God for my good fortune. Not understanding his meaning, I told him that I had already performed my devotions. He then informed me, that whilst purchasing some fruit in the bazaar, he observed the man who had been with me on the preceding evening, entertaining the country people with his dancing snakes ; they, according to their usual custom, sat on the ground around him ; when, either from the music stopping too suddenly, or from some other cause irritating the vicious reptile, which I had so often handled, it darted at the throat of a young woman, and inflicted a wound of which she died in about half an hour."

"Forbes had a narrow escape !"

"Indeed he had. Venomous serpents cannot but be dangerous playthings. Yet the practice is continued to this day. A very worthy and learned missionary, now in Calcutta, when at my house, assured me that the account I have now given you is correct. He has actually seen serpents, charmed by music, come forth from their hiding-places."

What accident happened with one to a young woman ?

* Mr. Yeates, author of an admirable Grammar of the Hindoostanee, and of several other excellent and learned works.

"What did Our Lord mean when he said to his disciples, 'Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves?' Are serpents wise?"

"Many things have been affirmed on this subject, Harry, which I regard as fables. The truth, I think, is, that there is a peculiar liveliness in the eyes of serpents, so that 'as sharp-sighted as a serpent,' passed into a proverb in the Eastern world. I regard Our Lord as saying, 'Be prudent as serpents in avoiding unnecessary dangers; but be far from imitating the malignity and revengeful nature of that animal; maintain at all times a holy simplicity of spirit, and be harmless and inoffensive as doves, those gentle creatures, who are remarkable for their affection.'"

WHEAT, BREAD, FRUIT, &c.

"What a plentiful harvest God has given us!" said Mr. Benyon, as he sat on a gate with Harry, and looked over one of his corn-fields; "how ought our hearts to glow with gratitude to Him for his goodness!"

What did our Lord say to his disciples? What proverb is there in the East about serpents? What is our Lord thought to have meant, when he said 'Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves'?

* Doddridge *in loc.*

"There has not been too much rain, as there was one year, to spoil it!"

"True, Harry! rain is a great blessing, when it is in season, and in measure. But too much rain, or too much sunshine, will alike ruin our hopes. You see how dependent we are upon God, even for our daily bread."

"This ear, with so many grains in it, all came from one corn,—did it not?"

"Yes: the blade, and the stem, and all the grains of wheat, with their fine covering, were all wrapt up in that little space."

"But how do you know that?"

"Because, if they had not been in it, they could not have sprung out of it. The earth has only expanded, and brought to maturity, what was already in the seed."

"How wonderful this is!"

"Yes, it is the work of a divine hand."

"And every one likes bread, father."

"True; It is as agreeable to the old man, as to the little infant; we never tire of it; it is as fresh and as pleasant to-day as it was yesterday. There are a variety of tastes; one is fond of an article which another

From what does an ear of wheat spring? What does the earth do to the seed? Do all people like bread?

er dislikes, but no one ever lived who did not relish bread."

"And did you not say, father, that it would grow in every country and climate?"

"Yes, Harry; and this is a kind appointment of Providence, and shews a tender care for the welfare of man."

"Pharaoh dreamed 'that seven ears of corn came up on one stalk, rank and good.' This was only a dream, was it, father?"

"It was a dream, Harry. But yet, it is remarkable that there is a species of wheat in Egypt, which really bears seven ears upon one stalk. Some of it has been cultivated in England, but it does not reach the perfection which it does in its native soil. No one would have even thought of one stem of wheat with seven ears on it. That there is such an article, and in Egypt too, is a striking proof of the truths of the Scriptures."

"Bread is spoken of very early in the Bible."

"Mention the first place you recollect where it is named."

Will it grow in every country? What did Pharaoh dream? What kind of wheat is there in Egypt? Can it be cultivated elsewhere? What affords a striking proof of the truth of the Scriptures?



“ ‘In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground.’ ”

“ And I think the first place in any records in which the word *Baker* is mentioned, is in Genesis.”

“ The bread at that early period, father, could not have been like ours ? ”

How is bread first mentioned in the bible ? Where is the word *Baker* first mentioned ?

“What makes you think so?”

“Because they made it so soon, and just as they wanted it, as appears from the feast which Abraham made for the three persons who called upon him.”

“You are right, Harry. Their loaves appear to have been a kind of biscuit. Thus our Lord repre-



sents a person requesting of his neighbor three loaves, for the entertainment of an individual, Luke xi. 5. Hence they are often called *cakes*. An Eastern traveller, describing a visit which he made to an Arab, says, ‘The woman was not idle, but brought us milk and eggs to eat, so that we wanted for nothing: she made also some dough for cakes, which were of the thickness of a finger, and of the size of a trencher,—she laid them on hot stones, and kept turning them; till at length she threw the ashes and embers over

Luke xi. 5. And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves.

Why was not the bread of an early period similar to ours? What does it appear to have been? Repeat the verse from Luke. What does an Eastern traveller say of his visit to an Arab?

them and so baked them thoroughly. They were very good to eat, and very savoury."

"The food of the Jews was generally very simple. It consisted chiefly of vegetables, milk, honey, rice, and bread."

"Sometimes the corn was parched, or roasted, and then eaten without any other addition, as appears evident from many passages of Scripture," Levit. xxiii. 14. 2 Sam. xvii. 28.

"In addition to honey, John the Baptist is said to have fed on locusts."

"Canaan, you know, father, was a land 'flowing with milk and honey.'"

"It was; though meat was eaten occasionally; principally at the time of their national festivals, or provided to honour some superior guest. Thus Abra-

Levit. xxiii. 14. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God : it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

2 Sam. xvii. 28. They brought beds and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched *corn* and beans and lentiles, and parched *pulse*.

What was the food of the Jews ? What appears from passages of Scripture ? Repeat the verses from Levit. and Sam. On what did John the Baptist feed ? What is said of Canaan ? When was meat eaten ?

ham, Gideon, and Manoah prepared a calf or a kid for their angelic visitants. When Samuel expected a visit from Saul, he procured for him a joint of meat," 1 Sam. ix. 24.

"But they were not permitted to eat every kind of meat?"

"They were not. Yet what was denied them, was chiefly such as was unfriendly to health, and unsuitable to the climate. Their common drink was water, though they sometimes took wine, especially at their feasts. Much appears to have been drank at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, where the Lord turned the water into wine."

"In those hot and dry countries water is of very great value. Hence, when Caleb gave his daughter a portion, springs of water are very particularly mentioned, Judges i. 15. Thus our Saviour intreated wa-

1 Sam. ix. 24. And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which is left! set it before thee and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee, since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

Judges i. 15. And she said unto him, Give me a blessing.

What did Abraham, Gideon, and Manoah prepare,? Repeat the verse from Samuel. What meat was denied to the Jews? What was their common drink? When was wine much drank? Where is water of much value? Repeat the verse from Judges?

ter of the woman of Samaria ; and the most desirable blessings are represented in the Scriptures by a figurative allusion to water, Psalm lxiii. 1. John vii. 37. Isaiah xii. 3. xlv. 3. Jer. ii. 13. Zech. xiii. 1. 1 Cor. x. 4.

for thou hast given me a south land ; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

Psalms lxiii. 1. O God, thou art my God ; early will I seek thee ; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is.

John vii. 37. In the last day that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

Isaiah xii. 3. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Jer. ii. 13. For my people have committed two evils ; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Zech. xiii. 1. In that day, there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness.

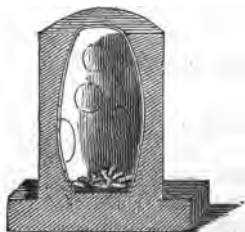
Cor. x. 4. And they did all drink the same spiritual drink ; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

Of whom did our Saviour ask water ? Repeat the verses from Scripture alluding to water.

OVENS.

"You know, father, it is said that the frogs, which were one of the plagues of Egypt, got into the ovens. How could they get up?"

"I am not surprised at your question, Harry. Wicked men have sneered at the Scriptures on this very account. This, however, is only a proof of their ignorance. In various parts of the East, instead of what we call ovens, they dig a hole in the ground, in which they insert an earthen pot, which having suffi-



ciently heated, they stick their cakes to the inside, and, when baked, remove them, and supply their places with others, and so on. Frogs, Harry, could easily get into such ovens as these."

What is said of frogs in the Scriptures? Why have wicked men sneered? How are ovens made in the East?

“This makes the meaning clear.”

“But the methods of baking their bread in the East are various. Dr. Shaw says, that ‘in cities and villages, where there are public ovens, the bread is usually leavened ; but in other parts, as soon as the dough is kneaded, it is made into thin cakes, which are either immediately baked upon the coals, or in a shallow earthen vessel like a frying pan.’ Another traveller informs us, ‘that the Arabs about Mount Carmel make a fire in a great stone pitcher, and when it is heated, mix meal and water, which they put on the outside of the pitcher, and this soft paste, spreading itself upon it, is baked in an instant, and the bread comes off as thin as our wafers.’”

“There is no part of the world in which the people have bread superior to our own ; and there are but few places in which it is equally good. God is perpetually feeding us, as He fed his ancient people, ‘with the finest of the wheat.’ His abounding goodness should awaken our liveliest gratitude.”

How is bread baked in the East ? How do the Arabs bake bread ?

ORNAMENTS.

“The prophet Isaiah gives a curious account, in his third chapter, of the dress of the Jewish women ; I wish you would tell me all about it, as some part of what he says appears very strange.”

“I cannot promise, Harry, to tell you *all* about it ; but perhaps if we talk over the subject, and refer to those who have travelled in the East, we shall understand the account better. What do you refer to particularly ?”

“Why, he says, they made ‘a tinkling with their feet :’ how was that ?”

“That is clear ;—they used to wear ornaments of gold, or silver, or other metals, on their ankles. Rauwolf tells us that the Arab women, whom he saw in going down the Euphrates, ‘wore rings about their legs and hands ; and sometimes a good many together, which, in their stepping, slipped up and down, and so made a great noise.’—‘In Persia and Arabia,’ says Sir John Chardin, ‘they wear rings about their ankles, which are full of little bells. Children and young girls take

What prophet gives an account of the dress of the Jewish women ? What made a tinkling of the feet in the women of the East ? What does Rauwolf tell us ? What does Sir John Chardin say ?

a particular pleasure in giving them motion ; with this view they walk quickly.’ ”

“It seems too, father, that the Eastern women wore large rings in their ears, as well as around their ankles.”

“They did, and do to this day. Travellers tell us there is a variety of ornaments for the ear. ‘Some of the Eastern ear-rings are so small, and go so close to the ear, as leave no vacuity between them ; others are so large as to admit the fore-finger between ; these are adorned with a ruby between two pearls strung on the ring.’—‘I have seen some of the larger ear-rings,’ says Sir J. Chardin, ‘with figures upon them, and strange characters which, I believe, may be talismans or charms. The Indians say that they are preservatives against enchantments. Perhaps the ear-rings of Jacob’s family, which he buried with the strange gods, were of this kind.’ ” Gen. xxxv. 4.

“Another traveller assures us that the rings in the

Gen. xxxv. 4. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their ear-rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

Describe some of the Eastern ear-rings. What do the Indians say of them ? Repeat a verse from Genesis. What does a traveller tell us ?

ears of the chief's wife of a valley near Mount Sinai, were of silver, and of so great a circumference, that a person might have put his hand through them.

"Forbes, in his *Oriental Memoirs*, gives a very curious description of the dress of a Hindoo lady. 'Their dress,' he says, 'is peculiarly becoming, consisting of a long piece of silk or cotton tied round the waist, and hanging in a graceful manner to the feet; it is afterwards brought over the body in negligent folds; under this, they cover the bosom with a short waistcoat of satin. Their long black hair is adorned with jewels and wreaths of flowers; their ears are bored in many places, and loaded with pearls; a variety of gold chains, strings of pearl, and precious stones fall from the neck over the bosom, and the arms are covered with bracelets from the wrist to the elbow; they have also gold and silver chains round the ankles, and abundance of rings on their fingers and toes; among the former is frequently a small mirror. I think the richer the dress, the less becoming it appears; so that a Hindoo woman of distinction always seems to be overloaded with finery.'"

"There are very strange things, father, among these ornaments, which you have not noticed; they are

Give Forbes's description of the dress of a Hindoo lady.

nose-jewels. Did ever any body wear jewels in the nose ?”

“Certainly ; it was a very ancient custom, and it is in fashion in some parts even to the present day, among women in all classes of society. A traveller describing his wife, says, that ‘she adorns herself with all kinds of rubies, emeralds, and pearls, as the manner is in the East, with the exception of certain ugly rings of very large size, set with jewels, which, in truth, very absurdly, it is the custom to wear fastened to one of their nostrils like buffaloes ; though it is an ancient custom in the East, which, as we find in the Scriptures, prevailed among the Hebrew ladies even in the time of Solomon. These nose-rings, in complaisance to me, she has left off ; but I have not yet been able to prevail with her cousin and sister to do the same ; so fond are they of an old custom, be it ever so absurd, who have been long habituated to it.’

“Bishop Lowth observes, from Chardin, ‘that it is the custom in almost all the East, for the women to wear rings in their noses, in the left nostril, which is bored low down in the middle. These rings are of gold, and have commonly two pearls with one ruby be-

Were nose-jewels formerly worn ? Is it the fashion at present in the East ? How does a traveller describe his wife ? What does Bishop Lowth observe ?

tween them, placed in the ring. 'I never saw,' says this traveller, 'a girl or a young woman in Arabia, or



in all Persia, who did not wear a ring after this manner in her nostril.' ”

“ I should not like a lady, if she were ever so fine, who had a ring in her nose.”

“ Perhaps not, Harry ; but it must appear pleasing in the eyes of the people of the East, or they would not wear them. Nose-jewels, strange as they seem to us, are of very great antiquity. Moses informs us that Isaac’s servant put on Rebekah, after she had conversed with him at the well, ‘ a golden ear-ring of

Do all the women of Arabia and Persia wear nose-rings ? What did Isaac’s servant put on Rebekah ?

half a shekel weight, and two bracelets on her hands of ten shekels weight of gold.'”

“But it does not appear that he gave her any nose-jewels ; and only one ear-ring ; which is very odd, you know, for every body has two ear-rings.”

“True, Harry : and from hence it seems almost certain that it was not an ear-ring which was given to Rebekah, but, as it is said in the margin, ‘a jewel for the forehead.’ And as the word is in the singular number, it is in a high degree probable, to say the least, that it was a nose-ring, or jewel.”

“It does seem so, indeed. I did not notice the reading in the margin.”

“This we should always do, for it is often more literal than the text ; and not unfrequently it throws great light upon the real meaning.”

RICE.

As Harry and his father were again walking the next evening in the corn-fields, and looking at the

What was the ear-ring probably that was given to Rebekah ? Is the margin in the Bible of much use ?

reapers, Harry inquired,—“is not rice a kind of wheat?”

“It may be so regarded,” replied his father, “as it furnishes bread for by far the greater part of the human race.”

“Does it?” exclaimed Harry, with a countenance full of wonder at the information.

“Yes, it is cultivated and eaten, more or less, in all parts of the Eastern world; yet the manner of its production differs from that of wheat. ‘It is sown,’ as a French traveller informs us, ‘in Lower Egypt, from the month of March to May. During the inundation of the Nile, the fields are covered by its waters, and, in order to detain them there as long as possible, a sort of raised embankments are thrown up around each field, to prevent them from running off. Trenches serve to carry thither a fresh supply; for, in order to make the plant thrive, its roots must be incessantly watered. The ground is so moistened, that, in some places, a person sinks in half-way up to his chin. Rice is nearly six months before it comes to maturity; and it is generally cut down by the middle of November.’”

Of what use is rice to mankind? Where is rice sown? What happens during the inundation of the Nile? How is the water kept upon the fields? How long is rice coming to maturity? When is it cut?

“The prophet Isaiah says :—‘Blessed are ye who sow your seed in every well-watered place.’—‘This exactly,’ says Sir J. Chardin, ‘answers to the manner of planting rice; for they sow it upon the water; and as they sow the rice in water, so they transplant it in water.’—‘The rice grounds,’ says the late Dr. E. D. Clarke, ‘are inundated from the time of sowing near-



ly to harvest. The seed is commonly cast upon the water. When the rice plants are about two feet high, they are transplanted.’”

“Well, father, this is indeed, as you said, very much unlike wheat.”

“Yes; ‘Some lands produce three crops in a year; vegetation is so quick, that as fast as the water rises, the plants of rice grow above it, so that the ear is nev-

What does the prophet Isaiah say? How is rice sowed? What does Dr. Clarke say of the rice grounds? What is said of the growth of rice?

er immersed. Men of experience affirm, that a single stalk will grow six cubits in one night.'

"This subject explains a beautiful passage in Ecclesiastes; 'Cast thy bread,' says the wise Man, 'upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.' Some have thought that the sacred writer here meant, that if any one literally threw bread into the river, they should find it again after a considerable lapse of time. This would not be likely, for the fowl, or the fish, or both, would assuredly devour it. But he who throws the seed-rice into the waters will, after many days, not only find again what he cast from his hand, but such a vast increase as will abundantly recompense his labours. So, no benevolent efforts to do good to mankind shall be lost, but shall assuredly in time, by the blessing of God, produce fruit to his glory, and the real welfare of our fellow-creatures. Thus the philanthropist—he who is engaged in the instruction of the rising generation, and the faithful minister of the Gospel, are all casting their bread upon the waters, which they shall certainly find again after many days. This view of things is not only just, but encouraging and delightful."

What passage of Scripture is explained by the sowing of rice? What have some people thought? What will he find who throws rice seed upon the water?

EATING FLESH WITH THE BLOOD.

“When God made a covenant with Noah after the Flood, father, He told him not to eat flesh with the life, that is, the blood, in it.”

“True, Harry ; and the disciples, in the New Testament, were charged to abstain from eating ‘things strangled, and from blood.’”

“But why, father ? Do you think any one would ever eat live flesh ?”

“Certainly I do. There is even reason to believe that the practice, shocking and inhuman as it is, still prevails in the East. Mr. Bruce says ; ‘Not long after we lost sight of the ruins of the ancient capital of Abyssinia, we overtook three travellers driving a cow before them ; they appeared to be soldiers. We saw that our attendants attached themselves in a particular manner to the three soldiers who were driving the cow, and held a short conversation with them. Soon after we arrived at the hithermost bank of the river, where, I thought, we were to pitch our tent, the drivers suddenly tripped up the cow, and gave the poor

What did God tell Noah when he made a covenant with him ? What were the disciples charged in the New-Testament ? What shocking custom still prevails in the East ? What account does Mr. Bruce give of the Abyssinians ?

animal a very rude fall upon the ground, which was but the beginning of her sufferings. One of them sat across her neck holding down her head by the horns ; the other twisted the halter about her fore-feet ; while the third, who had a knife in his hand, to my very great surprise, gave her a very deep wound in the upper part of the buttock. From the time I had seen them throw the beast upon the ground, I thought they were going to kill her, and to sell a part of the meat to us. But my people told me that they were not going to kill her ; this awakened my curiosity ; I let my people go forward, and stayed myself, till I saw, with the utmost astonishment, two pieces, thicker and longer than our ordinary beef-steaks, cut from the higher part of the buttock of the beast. It was done very skilfully, but I cannot tell how."

"Oh how shocking ! and so, I suppose, the poor cow bled to death !"

"No, she did not ; though it was a most inhuman practice. I will read the remainder of Mr. Bruce's account. 'The skin,' he says, 'which had covered the flesh which had been taken away, was left entire, and flapped over the wound, and was fastened to the corresponding part by two or more small skewers or pins. Whether they put any thing under the skin, between that and the wounded flesh, I know not ; but, at the riv-

er side, where they were, they prepared a cataplasm, or plaster of clay, with which they covered the wound. They then forced the animal to rise, and drove it on before them, to furnish them with a fuller meal when they should meet their companions in the evening.”

“But does any other traveller besides Bruce mention this circumstance?”

“The question, Harry, is a very proper one; we may well desire testimony upon testimony, to prove what appears so unnatural and extraordinary. In this case we have what we desire. Mr. Salt, in his voyage to Abyssinia, mentions some soldiers, who had got possession of several head of cattle; he says, they had fasted many hours, and had still a considerable distance to travel. One of them proposed cutting a steak from the thigh of the cow; this was assented to. They then laid hold of the animal by the horns, threw her down, and proceeded, without any farther ceremony, to the operation. This consisted in cutting out two pieces which might weigh about a pound. As soon as they had taken these away, they sewed up the wounds, plastered them over with cow-dung, and drove the animal forwards, whilst they divided the steaks among the party.”

What does Mr. Salt say of some soldiers in Abyssinia ?

"How cruel ! And what became of the poor cow at last ?"

"They drove her before them, and though she walked somewhat lame, she nevertheless managed to reach the camp ; and immediately after their arrival she was killed and consumed for their supper."

"If there were not good proof of it, one could scarcely believe that any one could act in this way."

"I allow, that one could not. Bruce's narrative was, for some time, generally discredited. There were few persons who did not regard it as his own invention, to see how far he could impose on the credulity of his countrymen. Now it is as generally believed. Sir W. Jones, writing from India, says, 'There is an Abyssinian here, who knew Mr. Bruce at Gondar ; I have examined him, and he confirms Bruce's account.'"

"But, surely, there is no account of any one mentioned in Scripture acting in this way ?"

"I fear there is, Harry. Turn to 1 Sam. xiv. 32 ; read that and the two or three following verses ;

" 'And the people flew upon the spoil.' "

Was Bruce's narrative generally believed ? What does Sir W. Jones say ? Repeat some verses from Samuel ?

* Works, vol. ii. p. 88.

"That is, after they had defeated the Philistines, and were very hungry and faint. Well, go on."

"'And took sheep, and oxen, and calves, and slew them on the ground; and the people did eat them with the blood.'"

"That, you know, was forbidden expressly in the covenant which God made with Noah. And this seems, to say the least, very much like the Abyssinian plan. But finish the account."

"'Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the people sin against the Lord, in that they eat with the blood. And he said, Ye have transgressed; roll a great stone unto me this day.'"

"He meant, on which they might properly slaughter the cattle."

"'And Saul said, Disperse yourselves among the people, and say unto them, Bring me hither every man his ox, and every man his sheep, and slay them here, and eat; and sin not against the Lord in eating with the blood. And all the people brought every man his ox with them, and slew them there.' This does look like it, father; but not quite like it, for it is said that the people 'slew' the cattle."

"I am not sure that they really did so. I rather

What was forbidden in God's covenant with Noah? Repeat other verses.

think that they maimed them, after the manner of the Abyssinians ; especially as the remark of Bruce is a just one, that ' a very few years after this, the Abyssinians came from Palestine, and carried with them this and many other Jewish customs, which have continued among them to this day.' "

NAPKINS.

One day, when Harry had seen his father washing himself, and wiping his face very particularly, as he was accustomed to do, with a napkin, he said, " Father, there is an odd account in an old book on your study table, of an emperor of Morocco, who never used napkins to wipe himself with."

" What then did he use, Harry ? "

" A boy's head."

" What, Harry ? A boy's head ! That would be a strange kind of napkin."

" Shall I fetch the book ? "

" Do, and let us hear it."

What does Bruce say of the Abyssinians ? What did the Emperor of Morocco use for a napkin ?

Harry reads. "When Diego de Torres, the Spanish Ambassador, in 1547, first dined with the Emperor of Morocco at his court, he was amused by the customs of the table. Neither knives, forks, nor spoons were provided; but each person helped himself with his fingers, and cleaned his hands with his tongue, except the Emperor, who wiped the hand he took his meat up with, on the head of a black boy, ten years old, who stood by his side. The Ambassador smiled; and the Emperor, observing it, asked what Christian kings wiped their hands with at meals? 'Fine napkins,' was the reply. 'What are such things worth?' inquired the monarch. 'A clean one at every meal would cost five shillings, or more,' said the Ambassador. 'Don't you think this napkin much better,' rejoined the Emperor, wiping his hand again on the black boy's head, which is worth seventy or eighty crowns?"

"A fine napkin, truly. This is indeed a singular account, Harry. I don't wonder that it caught your attention; yet there are many things on record of a similar kind, in ancient history. You know that there are various parts of the East, where, even to the present day, people of quality use their hands at their meals, and know nothing of knives or forks."

Give an account of the Spanish ambassador's dinner with the Emperor. What is done at the present day in many parts of the East?

"But do you recollect any thing like the story of the Emperor of Morocco, which I have read this morning?"

"No, Harry, not immediately; but there are allusions in Scripture, of which that account reminds me."

"Will you mention some of them?"

"In the fifteenth chapter of Matthew you will find an account of a woman of Canaan coming to our Lord, and asking his merciful interposition on behalf of her daughter; but he said to her, that 'it was not meet, to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs;' meaning, that it was not proper at that time to give the privileges of the Jews, or of the people of God, to the Gentiles. Do you recollect what her reply was on that occasion?"

"She said, 'Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.'"

"You are right, Harry; and here, I think, we have an allusion to a custom in the East. They did not anciently use napkins, but were accustomed to wipe their fingers and hands with the soft part of the bread, which they afterwards, or at the moment, threw to

What will you find in the 15th chapter of Matthew? What did Jesus say to the woman of Canaan? What answer did she make? What allusion to a custom in the East do we find in this answer?

the dogs. Homer alludes to this custom in his 'Odyssey.'

'As from some feast a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate ;
Rejoicing round some morsel to receive :
Such was the good man ever wont to give.' "

"In the striking parable of Dives and Lazarus there is an allusion, most likely, to the same practice. Do you recollect what the poor afflicted man, who lay at the proud rich man's gate, desired to be fed with, Harry ?"

"Yes ; 'with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.' "

"True ; and no doubt these, in ancient times, were much more than the crumbs which fall from our's, which, you know, would not be worth desiring ; no doubt the offal bread, with which they wiped their hands, and which was thrown away under their tables, is alluded to ; as this must have been considerable, and would have been sufficient to preserve any poor creature from starving. More than enough is often still wasted in a wealthy family, amply to supply the entire wants even of a poor

What does Homer say of this custom in the Odyssey ? What did the poor man wish to be fed with at the rich man's gate ? What were the crumbs probably that fell from the tables ?

household. How should every one, for the purposes of benevolence, if on no other account, practically obey our Lord's admonition, 'Gather up the fragments which remain, that nothing be lost.' We are sure that he does not feel as he ought, who has no compassion for the poor and the wretched. Surely, in this respect, as in all others, the divine precept, 'Do to others, as you would have them do to you,' should regulate our deportment."

"Memorable are the lines of one of our own poets,*—

"No radiant pearl which crested Fortune wears;
No gem that twinkling hangs from Beauty's ears;
Nor the bright stars which night's blue arch adorn,
Not rising suns that gild the vernal morn,
Shine with such lustre,—as the tear that breaks
For others woe, down Virtue's manly cheeks!"

BOOKS AND WRITING.

HARRY, one day, when walking with his father, said, "You have not told me any thing lately about the Eastern customs."

What is our Lord's admonition? Repeat another divine precept. Repeat some of Darwins' lines.

* Darwin.

"Have I not ? Then it is your own fault."

"My own fault, father ?"

"Yes, Harry ; because I have assured you, that whenever you find any allusion to them in the Bible, I will explain them to you ; and you know that this is always a great pleasure to me."

"But there have not been any such allusions in the chapters which you have lately read in the family."

"I think you mistake, Harry ; or you have not observed with care. But you should search the Scripture in private for yourself. It is a good plan which some excellent persons have pursued, to commit some interesting verse to memory every morning ; this, in a year, would amount to no small portion of Scriptural instruction."

"I often do so, father."

"Well, I had hoped such was the case, Harry. Your ever-dear mother always did so. Yet, as I said, you are mistaken in supposing that there is no allusion to Eastern objects and customs in the chapter which I read at family devotion this morning. There is a very interesting one. Come, let us read a verse or two again. 'And there was delivered unto Him the

What is a good plan as regards the Scriptures ? Repeat some verses from *Exodus*.

book of the prophet Isaiah, and when he had *opened* the book, he found the place where it was written, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor.' And he *closed* the book, and gave it again to the minister, and sat down."

"What do you refer to here, father? I do not find any allusion to the peculiar customs of the East."

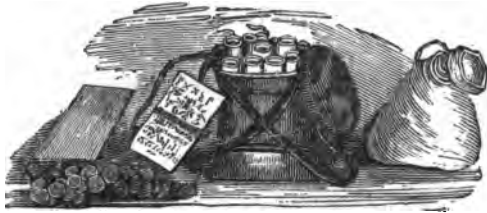
"Here are several, Harry. The one, however, which I refer to, would not be noticed by a mere English reader; it is the form of books in ancient times. The Greek words, translated in our version, *opened*, and *closed*, literally mean, unrolling, and rolling up the volume; as books were then written on parchments which were rolled up on a sort of staff. Many of these books are yet to be seen, especially among the Jews."

"I should not have thought of this. I wish you would tell me more about it; and how they used to write and make books, before printing was invented."

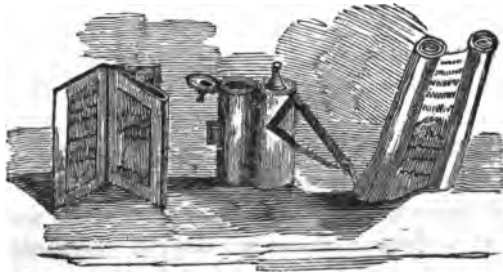
"Pieces of board, covered over thinly with wax, were much used to write on. Leaves of trees were also extensively employed; as also the inner bark of the lime-tree, which the Romans called *liber*, the Latin

What do the words *opened* and *closed* mean? What were books written on in ancient times? What were used to write upon?

word, you know, for a book. In the rolled up form,



they were called *volumen*; hence our word *volume* is derived. The Anglo-Saxon word *boc*, from whence our term *book* is derived, means a beech-tree. Parchment, or the skins of animals polished by the pumice stone,



What is the latin for book? What were these writings called when they were rolled up? From what is our word book derived?

was used, to preserve documents of value. There is a celebrated manuscript, the Gothic translation of the Gospels, called 'Codex Argenteus;' or, 'The Silver Book;' because the letters are all of silver, except the initials, which are of gold. But writing with the letters of an alphabet is not the only kind of writing which has prevailed."

"No! Why how could any one write without letters?"

"I will tell you, Harry. By signs and pictures. The North American Indians used thus to preserve accounts of their wars, and of different events which took place among them. These records, however, were, of course, exceedingly imperfect. The ancient Mexicans also had a similar method of writing, but more perfect and ingenious than that of the Indians. Robertson, in his admirable work on the History of America, tells us, that the servants of their monarch sent to him pictures of all the Spaniards, and of their horses, fire-arms, tents, and so on."

"And were not the hieroglyphics which we saw at the British Museum the other day, of the same kind?"

What was used to preserve valuable documents? What manuscript is there called the Silver Book? What other way of writing is there besides that of letters? How were the records of the American Indians made? What mode of writing had the ancient Mexicans? What does Robertson tell us?

"They were. They were the work of the Egyptians. The two celebrated pillars, of which you have seen drawings, called Cleopatra's Needles, which are seven feet square, and a hundred feet high, are on each side covered with them ; and the figures are cut, and with the nicest art, an inch deep in the hard granite. This method of writing could not be so accurate as ours ; and yet, perhaps, it was more so than we might imagine. They had symbols, the meaning of which was generally well known. Thus a sword was used for a warrior, or cruel tyrant ; an eye represented God, who sees all things ; a sceptre, a king ; a lion, courage ; armies were depicted by hands with weapons in them ; and a serpent, with its tail in its mouth, meant eternity.

"The Chinese writing is somewhat similar. They have no alphabet, but different characters for each word. These signs, in many instances, have some resemblance, real or imaginary, to the things for which they are used. There are said to be more than fifty thousand words in the Chinese language, for each of which there is a different symbol."

What nation makes use of hieroglyphics ? What are Cleopatra's Needles ? What symbols had the Egyptians ? What is the manner of writing among the Chinese ? How many words are there in the Chinese language ?

"How much more simple it is to form all our words, as we do, out of twenty-four letters !"

"It is."

"How were words first found out ?"

"Your question is somewhat difficult, Harry. It is in a very high degree probable, to say the least, that God taught our first parents the use of language, as He gave appropriate names to the different tribes of animals. It is said by the Greek and Roman writers, that the Phenicians first invented letters. They might, as they were a commercial people, first make them known to other nations ; but it is very likely that they derived them from the Jews, as their country was so near to that of the Hebrews.

"The earliest mention of writing in the Scriptures, and, of course, in the annals of the world, for there are no records of more ancient date, is in several passages of the Book of Exodus. In the first, (Exod. xvii. 14,) God commands Moses to write in a book an

Ex. xvii. 14. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven.

Of what is our alphabet composed ? Who probably taught our first parents the use of language ? Who first invented letters ? From whom was the knowledge of letters probably derived ? Where is the earliest mention of writing made in the Scriptures ? Repeat a verse from Exodus.

account of the defeat of Amalek, and of His determination to manifest His displeasure against that wicked people. The second passage is Exod. xxiv. 4, in which we are told, that 'Moses wrote all the words of the Lord.' The third is, Exod. xxxi. 18, where it is said, that God gave the two tables of the law to Moses, which were written on tables of stone by 'the finger of God.'"

"Writing upon stones, of which the tables given to Moses were the first specimen, so far as we know, appears to have been common afterwards in every age, and among most nations. Thus Job exclaims: 'O that my words were written in a book; that they were engraven with an iron pen, and lead, in the rock, for ever!' (Job xix. 23, 24.) Very long inscriptions are still found on the stones of the ruins of the most ancient cities in the world. Travellers assure us that in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai there are mountains and rocks of considerable size, which are covered with writing, but which, on account of the injury it has sustained from the lapse of years, cannot now be decyphered.

What is said in the second and third passage? What appears to have been a common mode of writing among most nations? What is said of it in Job? What are found on ruins in ancient cities? Of what do travellers assure us?

“You will recollect also that Samuel, when he had gained a great victory over the Philistines, took a stone, and set it up in a public place, and wrote on it



the word EBEN-EZER, which means ‘that he wished to acknowledge in the fullest way he could, that he had gained that advantage, not by his own might or wisdom, but by the help of God. (1 Sam. vii. 12.)

1 Samuel, vii. 12. Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Sheu, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

What did Samuel do after his victory with the Philistines? What does the word Eben-ezer mean?

"The apostle Paul, referring to the law, as written by the finger of God on tables of stone, tells us, that these divine precepts are written by the Holy Spirit of God on the heart of every real Christian. (2 Cor. iii. 3.) It should be the subject of our constant supplications that they may be thus engraven. Each one should say, 'Write all these thy laws on our hearts, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee!'

"In very early periods, we read of records on lead. Inscriptions are also found on many of the bricks which are still picked up where Babylon once stood. The Romans preserved their laws and records on tablets of brass.

"It appears from the Scriptures, that the prophets sometimes wrote upon tables of wood."

"But when did they first make paper?"

2 Cor. iii. 3. Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

What does the apostle Paul tell us? Repeat a verse from Corinthians. What should be our constant supplication and prayer? What do we read of in very early periods? What are found on bricks picked up where Babylon once stood? How did the Romans preserve their acts and records? What appears from the scriptures? Of what was paper first made?

"That is uncertain, Harry. We know that it was first composed of the papyrus, the celebrated rush of the Nile, from whence it derives its name. There was, however, a manufactory of paper at Memphis, at least three hundred years before the time of Alexander. The Romans, in after ages, made it perfectly white and smooth."

"What an useful rush the papyrus must have been !"

"It was. It not only supplied the Egyptians with paper, but they procured a sort of sugar from its juice; the harder parts of the plant were made into cups, and ribs of boats; the softer parts were formed into ropes, sails, cloth, shoes, strings, and wicks for lamps. The Egyptian reeds were also generally used for pens."

"What an useful invention paper was !"

"It was indeed; a work of any size written on bark, or on boards, spread over with wax, must have been very inconvenient."

"Why, father, it would have filled a wagon !"

"Well, I suppose it would. But for ages the papyrus furnished the world with paper; and near the close of the eleventh century, paper began to be made with linen rags."

What was made at Memphis ? What did the Romans afterwards do ? Of what other use was the papyrus ? Why was the making of paper an useful invention ? When was paper first made of rags ?

"The book that our Lord unrolled must have been in writing?"

"Certainly."

"Then, were they not very dear, as it would take a great while, you know, to write out a book?"

"They were. In the reign of our Alfred, in the ninth century, a bishop was obliged to go to Rome to buy books; 'for one of which the king gave him eight hides of land, or as much land as eight ploughs could till.' Stow informs us, that, in 1274, a Bible sold for 33*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Archbishop Ussher tells us, that in 1429, the price of one of Wickliffe's Testaments was 2*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.*; which the good bishop remarks, is as much as will now (in 1630) buy forty."

"It would buy many more now, father."

"It would; according to the rate at which I bought them for our charity-school, it would buy one hundred and thirteen."

"Well, what a difference!"

"Dr. Henry, the historian, might well remark, noticing this subject, that none but kings, bishops, and abbots could be possessed of any books; which is the

Were writings dear in ancient times? What did king Alfred give a bishop in return for a book? What does Stow tell us? What was the price of one of Wickliffe's Testaments? How many books would the sum have purchased in 1630? How many would it buy now? Who were the sole possessors of books in ancient times?

reason that there were then no schools but in kings' palaces, bishops' sees, or monasteries."

"But are there any books in the form of rolls now, father?"

"Yes; Dr. Buchanan assures us, that he had seen among the Jews, in Malayala, an ancient copy of the Law, written on a roll of leather; it was about fifteen feet long; the skins were sewed together. And there are many manuscripts of this kind, especially among the Jews."

"Printing was a fine invention, father."

"It was, indeed; we have great reason to be thankful for it. By its means books are multiplied to any extent, and are made accessible to all. No man is so poor but he may have a few books; and especially he may have the Book of Books, Harry; you know what that is."

"The Bible."

"I never think of the noble art of printing, without calling to my recollection the quaint though expressive language of old Fox, the martyrologist, on the subject. 'Hereby,' says he, 'tongues are known, knowledge

What people have books in the form of rolls? Why is printing an useful invention? What is called the Book of Books? Repeat the language of Fox on the art of printing.

groweth, judgment increaseth, books are dispersed, the Scripture is seen, the doctors be read, stories be opened, times compared, truth discerned, falsehood detected, and with finger pointed, and all through the benefit of printing. Wherefore, I suppose, that the Pope must abolish printing, or seek a new world to reign over; or else, as this world standeth, printing doubtless will abolish him. But the pope, and all his college of cardinals must understand this, that through the light of printing, the world beginneth now to have eyes to see, and heads to judge. He cannot walk so invisibly in a net, but he will be spied. And although, through might, he stopped the mouth of John Huss before, and of Jerome, that they might not preach, thinking to make his kingdom sure; yet, instead of John Huss and others, God hath opened the press to preach, whose voice the pope is never able to stop, with all the puissance of his triple crown. By this printing, as by the gift of tongues, and as by the singular organ of the holy Spirit, the doctrine of the Gospel soundeth to all nations and countries under Heaven; and what God revealed to one man is dispersed to many; and what is known to one nation, is opened to all.'”

FEASTS AND MEALS.

"THE parable which you read this morning appears singular, father."

"What do you refer to, Harry?"

"Why, the sending to call in the poor, and the maimed, and the blind, and the halt, to the feast. Nothing like this ever occurs among us."

"True, Harry; and on this account it may appear singular to us; but this is no reason why it should seem so in the East, the country in which the Scriptures were written."

"Certainly not, as you have shewn in a great many instances."

"And the picture which our Lord draws, of a king sending for the poor and the wretched to a feast, is not so unlike what really happens in the East, as we are ready to imagine. Pococke speaks of the admission of the poor to the tables of the rich. In his account of a great entertainment, made by the governor of an Egyptian village for the Cashif with whom he travelled, he says, 'The custom was, for every one, when

What custom in the East appears singular to us? What does Pococke say of the admission of the poor to the tables of the rich?

he had done eating, to get up, wash his hands, take a draught of water, and so, in a continual succession, till the poor came in, and ate up all, for the Arabs never set by any thing which is brought to table. When they kill a sheep, they dress it all, call in their neighbours, and the poor, and finish every thing.' This celebrated traveller afterwards mentions what is still more surprising : in giving an account of the diet of the Eastern people, he informs us, 'that an Arab prince will often dine in the street before his door, and call to all that pass, even beggars, in the name of God ; who obey the invitation, sit down, and when they have done, retire with the usual form of returning thanks.' '*

"How different this is to any thing we meet with."

"It is, certainly, somewhat so. But our Lord seems to have approved such a line of conduct ; you recollect, that the parable you have noticed is introduced by a very striking admonition to remember the poor. 'When thou makest a dinner, or a supper,' says our Lord, 'call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But

What do the Arab princes often do ? What admonition does our Lord give concerning the poor ?

ing to water.

* Harmer, vol. ii. 125

when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind ; and thou shalt be blessed ; for they cannot recompense thee ; but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

“ It was very common among the people in the East, when they particularly wished to honour a guest, who had been invited, to send a larger portion to him than to any other person ; thus Joseph sent five times as much to his brother Benjamin as to any of his brethren. (Gen. xliii. 34.) It is still regarded as a distinction of value, to have any portion from the table of a monarch, or of a great man. When a celebrated traveller dined in the presence of an Eastern sovereign, he was thought to be greatly honoured, because the king tore off a handful of meat from the joint, and sent it him. A Dutch ambassador,* in similar circum-

Gen. xliii. 34. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him ; but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. And they drank and were merry with him.

What was common among the people of the East ? Repeat a verse from Genesis. What is still regarded as a distinction ? How was a traveller thought to be greatly honoured by an eastern prince ? What were sent to a Dutch ambassador from the Emperor's table ?

* Van Braam.

stances, mentions it as a mark of great honour, that some bones of mutton, with half the meat gnawed off them, were sent him from the table of the Emperor. Several nations do not, to this day, use knives and forks as we do.

“ We read, that Abraham prepared the feast for the angels under the shade of a tree, Gen. xviii. 8. They often in the East still take their meals out of doors. The people generally dine about noon ; but supper, as was the case among the Jews, is often the principal meal, Mark vi. 21. Martha and Mary invited our Lord to a supper, John xii. 2. Luke xiv. 16. The communion of the Saviour with those who love him,

Gen. xviii. 8. And he took butter and milk and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

Mark vi. 21. And when a convenient day was come, Herod on his birth-day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee.

John xii. 2. There they made him a supper, and Martha served.

Luke xiv. 16. Then said he unto him, a certain man made a great supper, and bade many.

Repeat a verse from Genesis. Where do the people in the East frequently take their meals ? What is often the principal meal ? Repeat verses from Mark, John, Luke, and Revelation.

is described as a supper, Rev. iii. 20. The feast of the Passover was also celebrated in the evening."

"The Jews would not eat with every one, father?"

"True; they were very particular on this subject. But how did you know this, Harry?"

"In the sermon on Sunday morning, about the woman of Samaria, the preacher read the passage, that the Jews did not eat with the Samaritans, John iv. 9. But why would they not do so?"

"No doubt but they had some good reason. It is probable, that the Samaritans mingled some idolatrous rites with their meals, in which the worshippers of the true God could not join without offending Him. It was on this very ground that Peter objected to go and

Rev. iii. 20. Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me.

John iv. 9. Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

When was the feast of the Passover celebrated? Would the Jews eat with every one? Repeat a verse from John. Why would the Jews not eat with the Samaritans?

preach the gospel to the Gentiles, Acts xi. 3—8. The Jews were accustomed to break the vessels and cast them away, which had been touched by an unclean animal ; this indeed was according to the divine command, Levit. xi. 33. Dr. Clark tells us, that having been one night entertained very hospitably by a family in the East, he returned to his host the next morning, for a book which he had left the preceding evening ; he found him and his family busily engaged in breaking the plates and dishes out of which his friends had eaten, and purifying other articles by passing them through water or fire. No doubt but these ceremonies were originally designed to keep the Jews at a distance from the neighboring nations, that they might not be infected with their abominable idolatries."

Acts xi. 3. Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcized, and didst eat with them.

8. But I said, not so Lord ; for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

Levit. xi. 33. And every earthen vessel whereinto any of them falleth, whatsoever is in it shall be unclean ; and ye shall break it.

Repeat a verse from Acts. What were the Jews accustomed to do ? Repeat a verse from Leviticus. What does Dr. Clark tell us ? For what were the Jewish ceremonies probably designed ?

“ Our Lord gave thanks before he broke the bread : do the Jews do so now ? ”

“ Yes, all of them, who have the smallest pretensions to piety. Before they come to their meals, they still wash their hands, as the Evangelists inform us they used to do. Then the master takes a loaf of bread, and as he breaks it, he says, ‘ Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, the King of the World, who producest bread out of the earth ; ’ to which all present say, ‘ Amen ! ’ And then the bread is distributed. The chief person then takes the vessel of wine, and says, ‘ Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, who hast created the fruit of the vine. ’ Then the twenty-third Psalm is repeated. At the close of the meal, the master fills a glass of wine, and takes a piece of bread, which has been laid by for the purpose, and says, ‘ Let us bless Him, of whose benefits we have partaken. ’ The guests reply, ‘ Blessed be He who hath heaped favours on us, and has now fed us on His goodness. ’ The head of the family then prays God to restore Jerusalem, the Temple, and the throne of David to

What do the Jews do before their meals ? What does the master say as he breaks the loaf of bread ? What when he takes the vessel of wine ? What psalm is then repeated ? What does the master do at the close of the meal ? What reply do the guests make ? What prayer does the head of the family make ?

their former glory, and especially to send the Messiah to raise them from their low and degraded condition. To which the whole company add their Amen ; and they finish the ceremony by repeating the ninth and tenth verses of the thirty-fourth Psalm."

PRESENTS.

"HARRY, you may now show me the presents which your uncle was so kind as to send you. I had not leisure to notice them when they came, last evening.

"Well,—a Bible ! And a most beautiful edition of it too. I hope, my dear boy, you will read it with care, and value it for the giver's sake, but more especially for its own worth. That is, as Young says,

'A page, where triumphs immortality !' "

"Uncle William has written a verse in the blank leaf."

"So he has ; I did not observe it. What is it ?"

' "A glory gilds the sacred page,

Majestic like the sun ;

It gives a light to every age,—

It gives, but borrows none.' "

How is the ceremony concluded ? What does Young say of the Bible ? Repeat a verse of Cowper's.

“That is a verse of Cowper’s ; very suitable and very true ; for there is not an idea in the world, of God, or of divine things, at least, at all worthy of them, but it came from this hallowed source. This is evident ; or how can it be accounted for, that the philosophers of Greece and Rome, many of them men of mighty minds, knew not God, but worshipped ‘the creature ;’ and gods of wood and of stone, more than the Creator, ‘who is God over all, blessed for ever ?’

“But you have something else, have you not, Harry ?”

“Yes ; a microscope.”

“That is a very pretty present ; and it will furnish you with perpetual employment and gratification. You will indeed see, what I have so often told you, that God is as great and glorious in the minutest of His works as in the greatest. But you have been up some time, have you not Harry ? What have you been doing ?”

“I have been reading in my new Bible.”

“What part have you been reading ?”

“About Jacob, and his sending a present into Egypt, though it was but a poor one ; it was not worth so

What is the source of our knowledge of divine things ? What will a person see in the use of the telescope

much as my microscope and Bible. He said, Take now 'a present ; a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds,' and 'go a gainto the man.' That was, to Joseph, who was in Egypt, though they did not know him.

" Travellers tell us, that even the poor in the East do not visit without a present ; either a flower, a few radishes, or dates, or fruit of some kind. Thus the Queen of Sheba did not visit Solomon, without bringing with her costly presents.

" As soon as guests arrived, water was brought to wash their feet and their hands, Gen. xviii. 4 ; xix. 2. ; and it appears that they were not unfrequently anointed with fragrant oil, Psalm xxiii. 5. Hence Mary

Gen. xviii. 4. Let a little water I pray you be fetched, and wash your feet and rest yourselves under the tree.

Gen. xix. 2. And he said, Behold now my lords, turn in I pray you into your servants house and tarry all night and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early and go on your ways.

Psalm xxiii. 5. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies ; thou anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth over.

What present did Jacob send to Joseph ? What do the poor do in the East when they visit ? What did the Queen of Sheba do when she visited Solomon ? What was done on the arrival of guests ? Repeat some verses from Genesis. What was frequently done ? Repeat a verse from Psalms.

Magdalen broke an alabaster box of precious ointment, and poured it on the head and feet of our Lord. Simon, the master of the house, seems not to have received him in the respectful manner he ought, and according to the usages then common in society. Hence the Redeemer said to him, 'Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, *thou* gavest me no water for my feet; but *she* hath washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. *Thou* gavest me no kiss; but *this woman*, since I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil *thou* didst not anoint; but *this woman* hath anointed my feet with ointment.'

"Presents ever were, and still are, very common in the East, when persons visit each other, especially when they have audience of those of quality. Hence many instances of this kind occur in Scripture. Thus it is said that 'the kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.'"

"It does not say to whom, father."

"Yes, the Psalm does; to Messiah. Maundrell

What did Mary Magdalen do? How did Simon receive our Lord? What did the Redeemer say to him? Are presents still common in the East? What does it say in a verse of Scripture?

says 'After dinner we went to wait upon Ostan, the Basha of Tripoli ; having first sent our present to procure a propitious reception. It is counted uncivil in this country to visit without an offering in the hand. All great men expect it, as due to their character and authority, and look on themselves as affronted, and indeed defrauded, when this compliment is omitted. Even in familiar visits amongst inferior people, you shall seldom have them come without bringing a flower, or an orange, or some other such token of their respect to the person visited."

"I was reading, yesterday, in Rollin, father, of a singular sort of present which the Scythians sent to Darius ; it was a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. The Persian king thought, that by these emblems they meant to give up to him their country and their weapons of war."

"And was that their meaning .

"No ; one of his grandees explained the present very differently. ' Know,' said he, ' that unless you can fly away in the air, like birds ; or hide yourselves in the earth, like mice ; or swim in the water, like

What does Maundrell say of the custom of giving presents ? What present did the Scythians send to Darius ? What did the Persian king think of these presents ? What was their meaning ?

frogs ; you shall in no wise be able to avoid the arrows of the Scythians.' ”

“ Truly, this was a present of a very peculiar nature, and unlike the usual presents in the East. These were often very numerous. D’Herbelot tells us, that a poet of Cufah, in the ninth century, had so many presents made him in the course of his life, that at his death he was found possessed of a hundred complete suits of clothes, two hundred shirts, and five hundred turbans. We learn also, from Judges iii. 18, that there was often much parade and ostentation in bringing their presents. ‘Through ostentation, they never fail to load upon four or five horses what might easily be carried by one. In like manner, as to jewels, trinkets, and other things of value, they place in fifteen dishes what a single plate would very well hold.’ ”

“ How many garments that poet had given to him, father ! ”

“ He had ; the presents in the East are often very valuable. This appears not only from the case of the poet which I have mentioned, but from the circumstance, that Naaman brought as a present to the proph-

How many presents had a poet of Cufah in his possession at the time of his death ? What do we learn from the 18th verse of Judges ? Were the presents in the East valuable ?

et, 'ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.' "

"This must have been a very large sum, father."

"It was ; of some thousand pounds value. We are assured by a writer whose statements are generally admitted to be correct, that the commander of an Eastern province purchased peace of his adversary by sending him a present of seven hundred thousand drachms of silver, in ready money ; four hundred loads of saffron, which that country produced in abundance ; and four hundred slaves, each of whom carried a rich turban of silk in a silver basin."

"What a present, father !"

"It is said, that when the house of Charles XII. was burnt at Bender, there were presents in it of the value of two hundred thousand crowns. The Eastern magi brought, most likely, a present of great value to the infant Saviour. Do you recollect what it was ?"

"Gold, and frankincence, and myrrh. But yet, father, He appeared only as a poor child, lying in a manger."

"But, no doubt, they had been divinely taught that

What present did Naaman bring to the prophet ? How did the commander of a province purchase peace of his adversary ? What were found in Charles XII's house ? What presents did the wise men bring to the infant Saviour ?

He was a King, and they presented to him royal gifts. And on 'His head shall be many crowns.' 'He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him. His name shall endure for ever; and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed. And blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and amen.' "

CATTLE, AGRICULTURE, AND VINEYARDS.

It appears that the Israelites devoted their principal attention to cattle and the cultivation of the land. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were all shepherds, and had large flocks and herds. The wealth of persons in the early periods of the world consisted chiefly in these, though they did not neglect the raising of corn.

Why did they present him with royal gifts? Repeat the verses respecting our Saviour. To what did the Israelites devote their principal attention? Who were shepherds? What did the wealth of people in ancient times consist of?



It is said that Isaac sowed, and the Lord blessed him, so that he received a hundred fold, Gen. xxvi. 12. Indeed, we are informed, that Cain was a tiller of the ground, and Abel was a keeper of sheep. Moses, when he left the court of Pharaoh, kept the flocks of his father-in-law on Mount Horeb. Exod. iii. 1. Most

Gen. xxvi. 12. Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred fold, and the Lord blessed him.

Exodus iii. 1. Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law the priest of Midian ; and he led the flock to the

What is said of Isaac ? Repeat a verse from Genesis. Of what are we informed ? Repeat a verse from Exodus.

of the judges and kings of Israel were employed in agriculture. Shamgar was a herdsman, Judges iii. 31. When the angel appeared to Gideon, he found him threshing, Judges vi. 11. After Saul was appointed king, he looked after his father's cattle, 1 Sam. xi. 5. David, in his early youth, was a shepherd.

"You have often remarked, father, that David most likely wrote the twenty-third Psalm when he was watching over the sheep."

"I think it very probable that his contemplative mind, when observing the happiness of the flocks in 'the green pastures,' and 'by the still waters,' was raised to meditate on that blessed relation which the

back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

Judges iii. 31. And after him was Shamgar, the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad ; and he also delivered Israel.

Judges vi. 11. And his son Gideon threshed wheat by the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites.

1 Samuel, xi. 5. And behold, Saul come after the herd out of the field ; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep ?

How were the judges and kings of Israel employed ? Repeat two verses from Judges. Repeat a verse from Samuel. What was David in his youth ? When did David probably write the 23d Psalm ? Why is it probable ?

good God sustained towards himself. 'The Lord,' said he, 'is my shepherd, I shall not want.'"

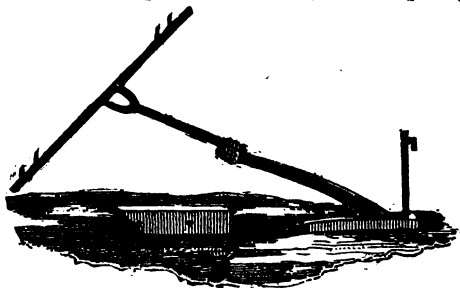
"And Our Lord, you know, father, said he was a shepherd."

"Yes; but this language was figurative, as used by Him; for He did not personally look after flocks. He meant that as a shepherd provided for, and took care of the sheep committed to him, so he would take care of his servants, and be to them every thing they should need, both here and hereafter. He calls himself 'the good shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep.' And we know that He did die for them, and thus 'bare their sins, and carried their sorrows.' And, in a better world, He has told us, that He will lead them to 'living fountains of water, and wipe away all tears from their eyes.' But, to return to the employment of the Israelites. When they settled in the land of Canaan, every family had a portion of land given to it. They could not part with these inheritances; at least not altogether. Every fiftieth year, which was called *the year of Jubilee*, the land, if sold, came back to the persons who had parted with it, or to their heirs."

"Did they always plough the land, father?"

In what sense was our Lord a shepherd? What did he call himself? What do we know? What was the employment of the Israelites?

"It is not unlikely that it was often turned up, with a kind of spade. Ploughs were invented very early. They are mentioned, Job iv. 8, and by Moses, Deut. xxii. 10 The prophets often speak of ploughing up



the fallow ground, Jerem. iv. 3 ; Hosea x. 12. Job

Job iv. 8. Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same.

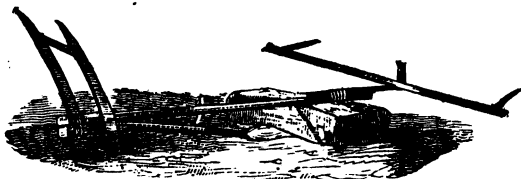
Deut. xxii. 10. Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together.

Jer. iv. 3. For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.

Hosea x. 12. Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy ; break up your fallow ground.

How was the land often turned up ? Repeat some verses from the Bible.

also speaks of harrows, Job xxxix. 10. Oxen were generally used for cultivating the ground. In Gen. xlv. 6, Joseph says, 'There are five years in which shall neither be earing nor harvest.' *Earing* is an obsolete word, which means ploughing; as appears also from 1 Sam. viii. 12. As the ploughs in ancient times



were much smaller and lighter than those which we use, it required greater care to hold them. Hence Our Lord said, 'No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.'

Job xxxix. 10 Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow, or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

1 Samuel, viii. 12. And he will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

What does Joseph say? What does *earing* mean? What of the ploughs of ancient times? What does our Lord say?

“Cisterns of water were often formed to refresh the ground, and from these, little rills were directed, in small channels, to different parts of the field, which were commonly opened or closed by the foot. There is a reference to this circumstance in Deut. xi. 10, 11.

“The Israelites, father, did not raise corn merely ; we often read of Vineyards in Scripture.”

“You are right, Harry ; and their grapes were very fine. You recollect the large cluster which was brought by the spies,—do you not ?”

“Yes ; and it seems to have been as much as two persons could well carry ; for you know two ‘bare it between them on a staff.’”

“Lebanon seems to have been remarkable for its

Deut. xi. 10. For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou' sowedst thy seed and wateredst it with thy foot as a garden of herbs.

11. But the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.

Why were cisterns of water often formed ? What were directed to different parts of the field ? Repeat a verse from Deut. Do we read of vineyards in the Scriptures ? Were the grapes fine ? What is said of the cluster of grapes brought by the spies ? For what was Lebanon remarkable ?

vines, Hosea xiv. 7. Towers and cottages were frequently built in the vineyards, not only for their protection, but for the abode of the vine-dressers, Matt. xxi. 33 ; Isaiah i. 8. In the East, vines were, and are, very commonly trained up on the walls of the houses, Psalm cxxviii. 3 ; Gen. xlix. 22. The vineyards of King Uzziah were on Mount Carmel, 2 Chron. xxvi. 10.

Hosea xiv. 7. They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine ; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

Matt. xxi. 33. There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard and hedged it round about, and digged a wine press in it and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

Isaiah i. 8. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard ; as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

Psalms cxxviii. 3. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house ; thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Gen. xlix. 22. Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well ; whose branches run over the wall.

2 Chron. xxvi. 10. For he had much cattle both in the low

Repeat a verse from Hosea. Where were towers and cottages frequently built ? Repeat verses from Matthew and Isaiah. Where are vines trained in the East ? Repeat verses from Psalms and Genesis. Where were the vineyards of king Uzziah ? Repeat a verse from Chronicles.

“During the seventh year, according to the divine command, the land was to lie fallow, and the vineyards were not to be pruned nor dressed.”

“Our Lord, father, compares Himself to a Vine, in the fifteenth chapter of John.”

“Yes; and He tells us that His people are the branches; that is, as the branches derive nourishment, and verdure, and fruitfulness from the parent stem; so, by faith in Him, we become fruitful in every good word and work. Without this faith, which is implanted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, we are as branches separated from the vine, which are fruitless, and of no value, but to be cast into the fire.”

“Do you recollect, father, that the Jews had any other kind of fruits?”

“Certainly; we read in the Scriptures of dates; of pomegranates, Deut. viii. 8; and of figs, in many

country and in the plains; husbandmen also, and vine dressers in the mountains and in Carmel: for he loved husbandry.

Deut. viii. 8. A land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey.

What was done during the seventh year? To what does our Lord compare himself? What does our Lord tell us? What are we without faith? Of what fruit do we read in the Scriptures? Repeat a verse from Deut.

places. Olives, also, were especially cultivated by them, for the sake of the fine oil which they produced. There was one Mount particularly famous for them ;—do you recollect what it was called ?”

“ The Mount of Olives.”

“ Dr. Clarke tells us, that they still grow there in great profusion. This mountain is very celebrated in Scripture. David passed over it barefoot, and weeping, when he fled from Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 30. It was on this eminence, from whence our Lord could see the whole city of Jerusalem, that He predicted its destruction. Here, also, He was in ‘an agony,’ when He bore the divine displeasure due to our sins ; ‘and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.’ Well does one of our poets, referring to this memorable scene of our Lord’s humiliation and sufferings, exclaim,

2. Sam. xv. 30. And Samuel went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot.

Why were olives cultivated ? What mountain was particularly famous for them ? What does Dr. Clarke tell us ? Repeat a verse from Samuel. From what eminence did our Lord predict the destruction of Jerusalem ? Where was he in “an agony ?”

' O Garden of Olivet, dear honour'd spot,
 The fame of thy wonders shall ne'er be forgot ;
 The scene most transporting to seraphs above,
 The triumph of sorrow, the triumph of love ! ' "

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

" It does not appear from the Scriptures, that there was by any means such a variety of professions among the people of the East as among us. We read indeed of ' the Valley of Craftsmen,' 1 Chron. iv. 14. These persons were evidently much prized, as we are informed that the Philistines and Babylonians took especial care to carry them away captive, whenever they were successful in invading the country, 1 Sam. xiii. 19. We often read of smiths and carpenters, Isaiah xli. 7 ; xliv.

1 Sam. xiii. 19. Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel ; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears.

Isaiah xli. 7. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheeth with the hammer he that smote the an-

What does one of our poets say ? What appears from the Scriptures ? What do we read of in Chronicles ? What are we told concerning Craftsmen ? Repeat a verse from Samuel. Of what do we often read ? Repeat verses from Isaiah and Zechariah.

13 ; liv. 16 ; Zech. i. 20. The trade of the potter also appears to have been common, Jer. xviii. 2. Some families wrought in fine linen, 1 Chron. iv. 21. Weaving also seems to have been generally practised, Job vii. 6 ; Isaiah xxxviii. 12. Most likely, as was the

vil saying ; It is ready for the sodering ; and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved.

Isaiah xlv. 13. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule, he marketh it out with a line ; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with a compass.

liv. 16. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals of the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work ; and I have created the water to destroy.

Zech. i. 20. And the Lord showed me four carpenters.

Jer. xviii. 2. Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

1 Chron. iv. 21. Er, the father of Lecah and Laadah, the father of Mareshah and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen.

Job vii. 6. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

Psalms xxxviii. 12. Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent ; I have cut off like a weaver my life.

What trade appears to have been common ? Repeat a verse from Jeremiah. What did some families do ? Repeat a verse from Chronicles. What seems to have been generally practised ? Repeat verses from Job and Isaiah.

case in England about seventy or eighty years since, many families, in villages, and in the country especially, spun and wove their own garments. Homer describes Eumeas, the steward of Ulysses, as making his own shoes."

"But did not the Jews carry on a large trade with other countries?"

"We have no reason to think so. Ezekiel describes at large the articles in which the merchants of Tyre trafficked; but only wheat, honey, oil, and balm are mentioned as the produce of Judea, Ezek. xxvii. Solomon was obliged to send to Hiram, king of Tyre, for persons who were sufficiently skilled to make the ornaments for his temple," 2 Chron. ii. 7, 13.

Ezek. xxvii. 17. Judah and the land of Israel they were thy merchants, they traded in thy market, wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil and balm.

2 Chron. ii. 7. Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and Jerusalem.

13. And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's.

What is most likely? How does Homer describe Eumeas? What does Ezekiel describe? What did Judea produce? Repeat a verse from Ezekiel. What was Solomon obliged to do? Repeat verses from Chronicles.

“The first mention of trade in the Scriptures is in reference to the Midianites and the Ishmaelites, who were carrying into Egypt spices, and balm, and myrrh, which were greatly used for embalming dead bodies.”

“But, they dealt in slaves as well?”

“I rather think they were ready to buy any thing of which they could make a profit. To buy or to sell a man is expressly contrary to God’s command, ‘He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death,’ and yet we know they traded in slaves.”

“Tyre seems to have been superior to any other country at the time it flourished, as to commerce. The words of the prophet Isaiah are remarkable, and are very applicable to our own land; ‘Her merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth.’ But they dealt in slaves, Ezek. xxvii. 13. and were defiled, as we read, ‘by the iniquity of traffic;’

Ezek. xxvii. 13. Javan, Tubal and Meshech, they were thy merchants, and they traded the persons of men, and vessels of brass in thy market.

For what were spices, balm, and myrrh used? What is contrary to the command of God? What is said in the Bible of selling men? What of Tyre? Repeat the words of the prophet Isaiah. Repeat a verse from Ezekiel.

so God declared that he would punish and destroy this proud and wicked city."

"And I read the account of its destruction in Rollin, the other day."

"I know you did, Harry. The historian has well described the fulfilment of the prophecy."

"Where is the prediction you refer to, father?"

"In Ezek. xxvi. 4, 5. We read, 'They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets, in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.'"

"This prophecy has indeed been most completely fulfilled. Bruce, the celebrated traveller, tell us, that when he passed by the spot where this flourishing city once stood, all he saw was, 'two miserable-looking fishermen, who had just closed their labours, about to spread their nets upon the rocks.'"

"You say, father, that the Jews were not engaged much in commerce; but Solomon had ships."

"It is true, Harry; but Hiram, king of Tyre, sent workmen to build them, and sailors to manage them.

What did God declare? Repeat the prophecy of the destruction of Tyre. Has this prophecy been fulfilled? What does Bruce the traveller tell us? Were the Jews much engaged in commerce? What did Hiram do?

It appears that Solomon took much interest in this business, because he went himself to Ezion-geber, and Elath, to witness the fitting out of the vessels, 2 Chron. viii. 17. These were the only sea ports the Hebrews possessed; and by means of the traffic which was carried on through them, silver was so plentiful in Judea, that 'it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.' This famous king also traded in horses, and chariots, and linen, very extensively, with the Egyptians, 1 Kings x. 28, 29; 1 Kings iv. 26. But the sea-ports which I have alluded to, were taken away from the Jews by Ziglathpileser, the Assyrian

2 Chron. viii. 17. Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Elath, at the sea side in the land of Edom.

1 Kings, x. 28. And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

29. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty.

1 Kings, iv. 26. And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

Where did Solomon go? Repeat a verse from Chronicles. Which were the only seaports of the Hebrews? How was silver accounted in Judea? In what did king Solomon trade? Repeat verses from Kings.

monarch, and thus their foreign traffic was completely destroyed."

"If Solomon brought so much silver into his kingdom, money must have been very plentiful."

"It does not appear, Harry, that the Jews coined any money, till long after their return from Babylon, in the time of Judas Maccabeus. It is true, money is often mentioned in the Scriptures ; but there is reason to believe that it merely consisted of pieces of metal, which were valued according to their weight, as is still the case in many parts of the East. After the Jews were subdued by the Romans, their money was common among them, as appears from the piece which the enemies of our Lord showed him, and on which was impressed the image and superscription of Cæsar, the Roman Emperor. Matt. xxii. 20. I have seen in the cabinets of antiquaries, some Roman medals, or coins, representing Judea, under the figure of a female captive sitting under a palm-tree, with the inscription,

Matt. xxii. 20. And he saith unto him, Whose is this image and superscription ?

How was the foreign traffic of the Jews destroyed ? When did they coin money ? What did money probably consist of ? What of money after the Jews were conquered by the Romans ? Repeat a verse from Matthew. What do the Roman medals or coins represent ?

JUDÆA CAPTA. These medals are remarkable proofs of the truth of Scripture, and of history in general."

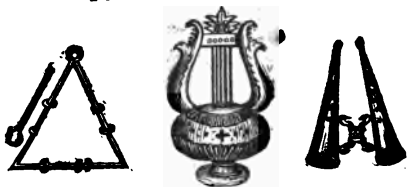


MUSIC AND POETRY.

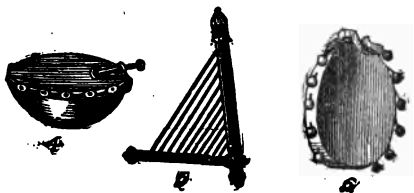
"You were asking me, yesterday, Harry, about the musical instruments mentioned in the Scriptures. I had not time then to answer your question ; but now we can talk a little about them.

What are proofs of the truth of Scripture ?

"Music appears to have been much cultivated from the earliest periods. Thus Laban, in the Book of Genesis, speaks of his wish to have sent Jacob away 'with the sound of the tabret and of the harp.' Isaiah speaks of the harp, the viol, the tabret. and the pipe,



as having been used in feasts, Isaiah v. 12. Music was generally used to celebrate victory over enemies,



Isaiah v. xii. And the harp and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine are in their feasts.

What appears concerning music? What does Laban say? Of what does Isaiah speak? Repeat a verse from Isaiah. For what was music generally used?

Exod. xv. 20, 21 ; 1 Sam. xviii. 6. To the truly pious individual it is principally interesting, as connected with the worship of God. Thus it was employed by David at the removal of the ark, 2 Sam. vi. 14. Psalmody, with music, formed a large proportion of the Jewish worship. The Harp of David has been deservedly celebrated in all ages. We also read of four thousand Levites, who with musical instruments praised

Exod. xv. 20. And Miriam the prophetess the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand ; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

21. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

1 Sam. xviii. 6. And it came to pass as they came when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities in Israel singing and dancing to meet King Saul, with tabrets, with joy and instruments of music.

2 Sam. vi. 14. And David danced before the Lord with all his might ; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

Repeat some verses from Exodus and Samuel. To whom is music interesting ? When was music employed by David ? Repeat a verse from Samuel. What formed a large part of Jewish worship ? What of the harp of David ? Who praised God in the temple ?

God in the Temple, 1 Chron. xxiii. 5. Trumpets are often mentioned as having been used at the solemn feasts."

"In the picture which you showed me, father, of the arch of Titus, you know, the trumpets are to be seen in sculpture on the inside of it."

"They are ; and they constitute a remarkable proof of the truth of the Sacred History. We must not, however, forget, that the finest music, and the greatest pomp, are all of no value in the sight of God, without the homage of the heart. Hence, says the apostle Paul, 'I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.' Many good men have been, and are of opinion, that the greatest simplicity ought to distinguish Christian worship. 'God,' said the Great Teacher, 'is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.' It is remarkable, that the most corrupt church is that

1 Chron. xxiii. 5. Moreover, four thousand were porters, and four thousand praised the Lord with the instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith.

Repeat a verse from Chronicles. What were used at solemn feasts ? What are sculptured on the arch of Titus ? What must we not forget ? What says the apostle Paul ? Of what are good men of opinion ? What says the Great Teacher ?

which is most distinguished for its paintings, its music, and the external pomp and splendour of its ceremonies ; which certainly derive no sanction from any passages in the New Testament."

"The Sarcophagus, you know, father, which we saw in the British Museum, and was brought to England by Belzoni, seems, like the arch of Titus, to prove the truth of Sacred History ; I wish you would tell me again about it."

"When this traveller was in Egypt, he discovered a tomb in the rocks, which had many rooms in it ; a great number of fine figures were also painted and sculptured on the walls. Among them, there were evidently many Jews, as appeared from their countenances and dress, as captives. From these, and also from the hieroglyphic characters, Belzoni affirms, he has no doubt but that this beautiful tomb was that of Psammis, a king of Egypt, the son of Necho, who had conquered Judea.

"There is another subject, for which the Bible is very remarkable, and which is closely connected with music ; it is poetry. The finest poetry which is to be found, is in the Holy Scriptures. Our most sublime

Which is the most corrupt church ? What does the Sarcophagus prove ?
What can you tell of Belzoni's travels ? For what is the Bible very remarkable ?
Where is the finest poetry to be found ?

poet has copied largely from the sacred pages. Do you know to whom I refer ?”

“ To Milton, father ?”

“ Yes. A large part of the Prophecies, and the whole of the book of the Psalms are in strains of beautiful and sublime poetry. It is still very common in the East, as travellers inform us, to recite in companies long histories, in a poetic style. The very language of the common people is so full of figurative expressions, that it can scarcely be regarded often as prose. Christians are exhorted by the Apostle to ‘ admonish one another, in Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, making melody in their hearts unto the Lord.’”

“ Will you mention a few of those parts of Scripture in which you think the finest poetry is to be found ?”

“ You will find many of these pointed out in the beautiful work of Bishop Lowth, called ‘ Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews ;’ a work, which, I hope, you will read with care when you are a little older. But I will refer you to a few specimens. The

Who has copied largely from the sacred pages ? What part of the Scriptures is in beautiful and sublime poetry ? What is common in the East ? How does the Apostle exhort Christians to admonish one another ? Where can you find the finest poetry in the Scriptures ?

Song of Moses, Exod. xv. ; that of Deborah, Judges v. ; of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii ; the Hymn in Isaiah xii. ; David's Lamentation for Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. ; the language of Balaam, in Numb. xxiii. and xxiv. ; the 139th and other Psalms ; and Habakkuk's description of the Divine Majesty, in the third chapter of his predictions."

THE GRECIAN GAMES.

"You said, father, that the Apostle Paul frequently alludes to the Olympic Games, which were so celebrated in Greece. I wish you would show me the passages to which you refer?"

"I shall be pleased to do so, Harry. They are well worthy of our attention. But, first, I must make a few remarks on these Games. You very properly call them celebrated ; for persons came from almost all parts of the civilized world to witness them. Kings, and the most distinguished characters, entered the lists, and counted the prizes on such occasions as ob-

To what does the Apostle Paul frequently allude ? Who came to witness the Olympic games ? Who entered the lists ?

jects of the greatest value, though they consisted only of crowns of leaves of parsley, or of palm-branches.



The candidates prepared themselves for the races by a particular diet for some time before they actually engaged in them. The Apostle, considering how much pains they took to gain these momentary, trivial honours, shows how much more reasonable it was that real Christians should awaken all their energies to secure the rewards which are infinitely superior. 'So run,' says he, comparing the Christian life to a race, 'that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we are incor-

Of what did the prizes consist? How did the candidates prepare themselves for the races? What does the Apostle show? What does he say?

ruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly ; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air ; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached the Gospel to others, I myself should be a cast-away.* These allusions would be sensibly felt by the Corinthians, to whom they were addressed, as the Games referred to took place very near their city.

“In those races, the candidates were accustomed to lay aside their long garments which would be certain to entangle them, and leave them no chance of gaining the victory. Many thousands of spectators usually witnessed the contest, whilst the judge took his place at the goal, holding up the prize to the view of all. The Apostle beautifully alludes to these circumstances in that well-known passage. ‘Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.’ If a Christian would win the heavenly prize, he must earnestly supplicate grace to lay aside those sins which would entangle and hinder him in his career.”

* Where did the games take place ? What was done in the races ? Who witnessed the contest ? What does the Apostle say ?

“What is meant by the sin which ‘most easily besets us?’”

“I apprehend, that sin to which a man is most prone. One is most prone to anger, another to pride, and so on. We must guard in general against all sin, but especially against that which most easily gains an advantage over us. Just as the citizens of a besieged town would set a watch on every part of the walls, but they would look with double vigilance to a position which they knew to be particularly exposed. But there are two other fine and most interesting passages in which the Apostle refers to these Games.”

“Please to mention them.”

“The one is, Philipp. iii. 13, 14. ‘Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The other is, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. ‘I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall

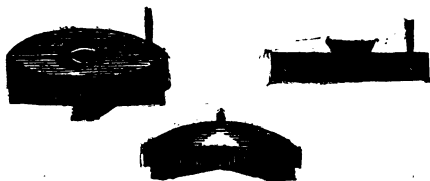
What is meant by the sin which most easily besets us? What sin must we especially guard against? How do you compare this sin with an exposed position in a besieged town? What two verses in Philipians mention these games? What verses from Timothy?

give me at that day ; and not to me only, but to all them also that love His appearing.' ”

GRINDING.

“ In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, father, it is said, ‘two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left.’ Do *women* ever grind at the mill ? I never saw any doing so.”

“ True, Harry ; here is indeed a custom peculiar to the East. ‘Most families,’ says Dr. Shaw, ‘grind their wheat and barley at home, having two portable



grindstones for that purpose. The uppermost is turn-

What is said in the 24th chapter of Matthew ? What do most families do in the East ?

ed round by a small handle of wood, or iron, placed in the edge of it, while the corn is poured between them. When this stone is large, or expedition is required, then a second person is called in to assist. It is usual for the women alone to be concerned in this employ, sitting themselves down over against each other, with the millstones between them.' Similar mills were in use in Scotland, till very lately, especially in the Highlands, and were called *querns*. Pennant, in his Tour, has given a picture of this useful article. Most likely, it was one of these millstones which the woman threw on the head of Abimelech, Judges ix. 53. See also Matt. xviii. 6. As it was essential to the nourishment of the family to have a mill of this kind, God forbade any person to take in pledge the nether or the upper millstone ; because, it is expressively

Judges ix. 53. And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull.

Matt. xviii. 6. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.

How are the grindstones used ? Who are concerned in this employment ? What were mills in Scotland called ? Repeat a verse from Judges and a verse from Matthew.

added, ' he taketh a man's life to pledge,' Deut. xxiv. 6.

"It appears from the Scriptures, that there were mills sometimes in prisons, at which the criminals were employed. Samson ground in the prison house, Judges xvi. 21. The prophet Isaiah speaks of grinding corn as the work of a slave, Isaiah xlvii. 2.

"The women still grind the corn in the East. 'In the earliest dawn of the morning,' says Forbes, 'in all the Hindoo towns and villages, the hand-mills are at work; when the menials and widows grind meal sufficient for the daily consumption of the family. There is a windmill at Bombay for grinding corn; but I do not recollect seeing another in India, where the usual method of grinding is with millstones, and it is always performed by women, who resume their task

Deut. xxiv. 6. No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge; for he taketh a man's life to pledge.

Judges xvi. 21. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

Isaiah xlvii. 2. Take the millstones and grind meal; uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

What is forbidden in Deuteronomy? Where were mills sometimes used? Of what does the prophet Isaiah speak? What do the women still do in the East? What does Forbes say? What does he say of the Hindoo widows?

every morning ; especially the Hindoo widows, dives-



ted of every ornament, with their heads shaved, and degraded to almost a state of servitude. Very similar must have been the custom in Judea, from the pathetic lamentation of the prophet, 'Come down, and sit in the dust, O Virgin, daughter of Babylon ; sit on the ground ; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate ; take the millstones, and grind meal : sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of Chaldea, for thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms.' ”*

Repeat the lamentation of the prophet.

* Forbes's Orient. Mem. vol. i. p. 210.

"It is very surprising, father, that the more we examine, the more we find the Bible right in every thing !"

"It is ; and Mr. Salt in his voyage to Abyssinia, and the late Dr. Clarke, of Cambridge, affirm, that women are still employed in the same way in the East."

TENTS.

"HAVE you any other passage of Scripture, Harry, for examination ?"

"No, father ; will you tell me a few ?"

"Well, I will ; but I rather like you to select them yourself. I was this morning noticing the expressions in the Book of Judges, 'Behold, now the day draweth towards evening.' The reference in the margin, is, 'It is the pitching time of the day.' So termed, no doubt, in allusion to travellers, who, when the day is closing, pitch their tents that they may rest for the night. Dr. Shaw says, 'Our constant practice was to

What do Mr. Salt and Mr. Clarke affirm ? What is said in the book of Judges ? Why is the evening called "the pitching time of day." ?

rise at break of day, set forward with the sun, and travel till the middle of the afternoon ; at which time we began to look out for the encampments of the Arabs, who pitch in woods, valleys, or places the least conspicuous.' ”

“We read of tents very early in the Scriptures. Jabal, it is said, ‘was the father of such as dwell in tents.’ Most likely this passage refers to him as the inventor of them. The Patriarchs, we are often informed, ‘dwelt in tabernacles,’ or tents. Each one appears to have had a separate tent. Sarah’s tent, we are told, was assigned to Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. 67. Jacob, Rachel, and Leah had their particular tents, Gen. xxxi. 33. They were frequently pitched beneath the shade of a tree ; this was the case with that of Abraham on the plains of Mamre, Gen. xviii. 4. The

Gen. xxiv. 67. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife.

Gen. xxxi. 33. And Laban went into Jacob’s tent, and into the two maid servants’ tents ; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah’s tent, and entered into Rachel’s tent.

Gen. xviii. 4. Let a little water be fetched I pray you, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

What does Dr. Shaw say ? What is said of Jabal ? What does this probably mean ? Where did the Patriarchs dwell ? Had each a separate tent ? Repeat verses from Genesis concerning tents.

prophetess Deborah dwelt under a palm tree,—no doubt, in a tent,—in Mount Ephraim,” Judges iv. 5.

“Tents were rendered firm, as with us, by cords and stakes, and could be easily enlarged by lengthening the one and strengthening the other; to which there is an allusion in Isaiah liv. 2. Travellers in the East generally fix their tents near some spring, or fountain, or river, 1 Sam. xxix. 1.

“The whole nation of the Israelites lived forty years in tents, in the wilderness. These were chiefly composed of the branches of trees. That they might recollect this circumstance, and God’s goodness in that memorable journey, God commanded them annually

Judges iv. 5. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah, between Ramar and Bethel in Mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

Isaiah liv. 2. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.

1 Sam. xxix. 1. Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek, and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel.

Where did Deborah dwell? Repeat a verse from Judges. How were tents rendered firm and enlarged? Repeat a verse from Isaiah, and a verse from Samuel. Of what were the tents composed in which the Israelites lived forty years?

to forsake their usual dwellings, and to live for a season in tents. Levit. xxiii. 40. This command is still observed by the Jews in their Feast of Tabernacles.

"Tents are made of various materials. Many consist of only a coarse cloth of goats' hair, suspended on a few sticks, not better than many which are common among us."

"You mean the tents of the Gipsies, father?"

"Yes, Harry; according to the accounts of travellers, many tents in the East are not superior, and many even worse, than these. But not a few, on the contrary are very superb. Travellers speak of some which have been three or even four years in making. That of Nadir Shah was covered over with scarlet broadcloth, lined with satin of a violet colour, and adorned with figures of animals and flowers, which were all formed of pearls and precious stones.

"To show the entire ruin which should fall on Bab-

Levit. xxiii. 40. And ye shall take you on the first day, the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.

What did God command the Israelites to do? When is this command observed by them? Of what were tents made? What do travellers say of them? Of what was the tent of Nadir Shah made?

ylon, the prophet said, 'Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherd dwell there;' that is, it shall be utterly forsaken: and the prediction has been minutely fulfilled."

"I wonder, father, that preachers do not more often notice the customs of the East, as they throw so much light on Scripture?"

CLIMATE.

'IN the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.' This is the complaint of Jacob. With us, the days and nights bear a considerable resemblance to each other; but there is a much greater difference at some seasons in the East. 'In lower Asia, in particular,' says Sir J. Chardin, 'the day is always hot; and as soon as the sun is fifteen degrees above the horizon, no cold is felt in the depth of winter itself. On the contrary, in the height of summer the nights are as cold as at Paris in the month of

What did the prophet say of Babylon? Has the prediction been fulfilled? Do the customs of the East throw much light on Scripture? What complaint does Jacob make in Genesis? How do the seasons differ here from those in the East? What does Sir J. Chardin say?

March. It is for this reason that in Persia and Turkey they always make use of furred habits in the country, such only being sufficient to resist the cold of the nights."

FIRE.

"OBSERVE Leviticus vi. 13. 'The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar ; it shall never go out.'"

"I recollect, father, the Romans had a fire that was never to go out. I read of it, the other day, in Goldsmith's Roman History. It was kept up by the Vestal Virgins."

"It was. And without doubt had its origin from this fire mentioned in Leviticus. Sir W. Jones tells us, in the Asiatic Researches, that the priests in Persia, when they enter on their office, kindle a fire with two hard pieces of wood, and keep it lighted through their lives. So Q. Curtius, narrating the particulars of the march of the army of Darius, says, 'The fire, which they called *eternal*, was carried before the sol-

What does Leviticus say ? Who kept up the Roman fire ? What does Sir W. Jones tell us ? What does Q. Curtius say ?

liers, on silver altars ; the Magi came after it, singing hymns in the Persian manner ; and three hundred and sixty-five youths, clothed in scarlet, followed, according to the number of the days in the year.' ”

“ It must have been a very pretty sight, father. But why did God command the fire to be always kept burning on the altar in the Temple ? ”

“ That is a very proper question, Harry. No doubt, to intimate to the worshippers, that their gratitude for the divine mercies should be perpetual. And not only so, but to be a constant emblem of the awful justice of the Most High, and of the never-failing efficacy of the atoning merit of the great Messiah, who, in the fulness of time, was ‘to be cut off,’ as the prophet Daniel says, ‘but not for himself ; to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.’ ”

BOTTLES.

“ OUR Lord speaks of putting new wine into old bottles ; and says, we ought not to do so. But are not old bottles as good as new ? ”

Why did God command the fire to be always kept burning on the altar in the Temple ? What does the prophet Daniel say ?

“With us perhaps they are ; but this was not the case in the East. They were made of various materials ; principally of skins of animals. ‘The people in the East keep their milk, wine, water, and other liquors,’ says Sir J. Chardin, ‘in leathern bottles, made commonly of goat-skins. When the animal is



killed, they cut off its feet, and its head, and so they draw it out of its skin, without cutting open the belly. They afterwards sew up the places where the legs were cut off, and the tail ; and when it is filled they tie it about the neck. These nations, and the country people of Persia, never go a journey without a small

What were bottles made of in the East ? How were they made ?

leathern bottle of water hanging by their side. The great leathern bottles are each made of the skin of a he-goat, and the small ones are made of a kid's skin.' These bottles, when old, are liable to break and burst. Hence the propriety of not putting new wine in old bottles. This fact explains many passages of Scripture. Matt. ix. 17. ; Mark ii. 22.

"This makes our Lord's meaning very plain, father."

"It does. 'The same person,' says Maundrell, 'whom we saw officiating at the altar in his embroidered robes, brought us, the next day, on his own back, a kid, and a goat-skin of wine, as a present from the convent.' Mr. Bruce, speaking of similar vessels,

Matt. ix. 17. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles ; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out and the bottles perish ; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Mark ii. 22. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles ; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred ; but new wine must be put into new bottles

What do the people of the East carry with them when they travel ? Of what are the large and small bottles made ? What of the bottles when old ? How are many passages in Scripture explained ? Repeat some verses from Matthew and Mark. What does Maundrell say ?

says, 'A gisba is an ox's skin, squared, and the edges sewn together by a double seam, which does not let out the water, much resembling that upon the best English cricket-balls. An opening is left at the top of it, in the same manner as the bung-hole of a cask ; around this the skin is gathered to the size of a large handful ; which, when full of water, is tied round with whipcord. These vessels generally contain about sixty gallons each, and two of them are the load of a camel. They are then smeared on the outside with grease, to prevent the water from oozing through, and from being evaporated by the heat of the sun ; which, in fact, happened to us twice, so that we were in imminent danger of perishing by thirst.'

"To say the least, it appears in our version to be but a poor present that so wealthy a person as Abigail brought to David. The historian informs us, that she brought him two bottles of wine. But when we recollect that most likely they were the skins perhaps of some large animal full of wine, it seems then becoming her affluence. How strange, and without meaning, does the comparison which David makes of himself, when in trouble and affliction, to a bottle in the

Give Mr. Bruce's account of the eastern bottles. What did Abigail bring to David ? What must we recollect concerning the size of the bottles ? What comparison of David's appears strange ?

smoke, appear, without a knowledge of the customs of the East," Psalms cxix. 83.

"But very plain with a knowledge of them, father ; because a leathern bottle hung up in the smoke would soon be shrivelled up, and good for nothing."

SHOES.

"God is represented as saying, in the sixtieth Psalm, 'Moab is my wash-pot ; over Edom will I cast out my shoe.' I have been thinking, but I cannot understand it."

"Well, we will try and clear it up. The language is highly figurative ; it seems to mean, that the people of Moab should be reduced to the meanest condition as a slave is, who waits on his lord, and holds the basin in which he washes his feet. And that the land

Psalms cxix. 83. For I am become like a bottle in the smoke, yet do I not forget thy statutes.

Repeat a verse from the Psalms. How would a bottle be affected by the smoke ? What is said in the sixtieth Psalm ? What does this figurative language mean ?

of Edom, or Idumea, should be completely conquered, as the people are, on whose necks the victor sets his foot. The casting of the shoe in ancient times, in the East, was a sign of dominion."

"What a good meaning you give the verse, father!"

"It seems to be the natural sense of it, Harry. Joshua and Moses were both told, when they came into the Divine presence, to loose their shoes from their feet. This was, and is, in the East, a mark of reverence. Maundrell tells us, that in some cases, during his travels, he was obliged to comply with this custom, when he visited private individuals. 'At the doors of an Indian Pagoda,' says a traveller, 'are seen as many slippers and sandals as there are hats hanging up in our churches.' The Egyptians do not permit any one to enter their temples with shoes on, because shoes being made of the skin of dead animals, are regarded as polluting them; and the Turks always leave their shoes at the entrance of their mosques."

"Our worship, father, would not be so much disturbed as it is, by people coming in late, if they were

What is a sign of dominion in the East? What were Moses and Joshua told to do? What is a mark of reverence in the East? What does Maundrell tell us? What is seen at the door of an Indian Pagoda? What will the Egyptians not permit? What do the Turks do?

obliged to leave their shoes and pattens at the door. Would it not be a good plan ?”

“ Yes ; but I fear it would be impossible to persuade people to come into it ; and especially would it be difficult to make those adopt it, who cannot be prevailed on to come to divine worship at the proper time. But, to return to our subject, putting off the shoes was an expression of mourning. Thus David, when driven from Jerusalem by the unnatural rebellion of his son Absalom, went up Mount Olivet ‘ barefoot,’ as well as weeping. So, Mr. Addison, in his account of Barbary, says, ‘ The relations of a deceased person, for seven days after the interment, stir not abroad ; or if by some extraordinary occasion they are forced to go out of doors, it is without shoes ; which is a token with them that they have lost a dear friend.’ Thus, when God commanded Ezekiel to abstain from mourning, among other things, he bade him ‘ put his shoes on his feet.’ Servants were accustomed to unloose, and to bear the shoes of their masters, when entering a temple, or the houses of persons of any rank. In allusion to this custom, John the Baptist said, that he regarded it as

What would be a good custom in our churches ? What was an expression of mourning in the East ? What was done by David ? What does Mr. Addison say of Barbary ? What was Ezekiel told to do ? What were servants accustomed to do ?

too great an honour to be conferred on him, either to unloose or to bear the shoes of Messiah. Unfeigned humility has ever been a mark of true religion.

“ We must not forget, when we speak of the shoes of the people of the East, that they were by no means like ours. They were sandals, or like the soles of our shoes, tied on the foot with a band. Hence they could very easily pull them off on entering a house, or a holy place. Exod. iii. 5. ; Josh. v. 15. And hence arose the necessity and comfort of washing the feet of a guest after his arrival from a journey. This was generally done by the servants in the family. It was a mark of condescension in the Lord Jesus, especially when we regard Him in the dignified character in which He is presented to us by the sacred penmen, to have washed His disciples’ feet; no doubt he did

Ex. iii. 5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither ; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Josh. v. 15. And the captain of the Lord’s host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot ; for the place where thou standest is holy.

What does John the Baptist say of this custom ? What were the shoes worn by the people of the East ? Why was it necessary to wash the feet after a journey ? What was a mark of condescension in the Lord Jesus ?

so, to teach us that there is no duty by which we can promote the comfort and the welfare of the meanest of our brethren, to be regarded as beneath us."

THRONES.

"WHAT a fine throne that of Solomon must have been, father ! How I should like to have seen it !"

"Do you recollect what is said of it ?"

"It was made of ivory, and overlaid with the finest gold ; it had six steps, and the top of it was round behind ; and there were arms to lean on each side of the seat ; two lions were beside them ; on each side of the six steps, there were twelve lions. 'There was not the like,' it is said, 'made in any kingdom,' " 1 Kings x. 20.

"No doubt, Harry, but it was very magnificent, as

1 Kings. x. 20. And twelve lions stood there on the one side, and on the other upon the six steps ; there was not the like made in any kingdom.

What does it teach us ? What is said of Solomon's Temple ? Repeat a verse from Kings.

all thrones in the East are. Tavernier, in his *Indian Travels*, gives a very striking description of the throne of the Great Mogul. Indeed, he has seven thrones ; some set all over with diamonds ; others, with rubies, emeralds, and pearls. But the largest throne is erected in the hall of the first court of the palace ; it is six feet long, and four broad. 'I counted,' says he, 'about a hundred and eight pale rubies about it, the least whereof weighed a hundred carats ; but there are some that weigh two hundred. I counted above one hundred and forty emeralds, that weighed, some threescore, some thirty carats. The under part of the canopy is entirely embroidered with pearls and diamonds, with a fringe of pearls round the edge. Upon the top of the canopy, which is made like an arch with four panes, stands a peacock, with his tail spread, consisting entirely of sapphires, and other proper coloured stones ; the body is of beaten gold, enchased with numerous jewels ; and a great ruby adorns his breast, to which hangs a pearl that weighs fifty carats.* On each side of the peacock stand two

How many thrones has the Great Mogul ? Give Tavernier's description of the largest throne. How much is a carat ?

* A carat of gold is the weight of one scruple, or twenty-four grains ; a carat of pearls or diamonds is four grains only.

nosegays as high as the bird, consisting of various sorts of flowers, all of beaten gold enamelled. When the king seats himself upon the throne, there is a transparent jewel, with a diamond appendant, of eighty or ninety carats weight, encompassed with rubies and emeralds, so suspended, that it is always in his eye. The twelve pillars also which uphold the canopy are set round with rows of diamonds of an excellent water, that weigh from six to ten carats a piece. At the distance of four feet on each side of the throne are placed two umbrellas, the handles of which are about eight feet high, covered with diamonds; the umbrellas themselves being of crimson velvet, embroidered and fringed with pearl. This is the famous throne which Timour began, and Shah Johan finished; and is really reported to have cost a hundred and sixty millions, and five hundred thousand livres of our money.”

“What a throne, father! Why it outshone that of Solomon!”

“I suppose it did. But there is one throne which will infinitely surpass even this.”

“What throne can this be?”

Who began and finished this splendid throne? What did it cost?

“You will find an account of it in the seventh chapter of the Book of Daniel.”

THE MIRAGE.

“BISHOP LOWTH translates the first clause of Isaiah, xxxv. 7, ‘And the glowing sand shall become a pool.’ In his note on the passage, he says, ‘The word is Arabic, as well as Hebrew ; but it means the same thing in both languages ; namely, the glowing sandy plain, which, in the hot countries, at a distance, has the appearance of water. It sometimes tempts thirsty travellers out of their way, but deceives them when they come near ; either going forward,—for it always appears at the same distance, or it quite vanishes.’”

“Dr. E. D. Clarke, in his Travels, has given a very lively view of this wonderful appearance.”

“I did not notice it, father.”

“No, Harry, you could not do so, as you have but just finished the first volume ; and the account I refer to is very far on in the second.”

Find and repeat the account of a throne in the 7th chapter of the Book of Daniel. What does Bishop Lowth say in his note on a passage in Isaiah ?

“ Will you please to tell me about it ? ”

“ He says, ‘ We arrived at the wretched solitary village of Utko, near the muddy shore of the lake of that name, the entrance to which is called *Maadie*. Here we procured asses for all our party ; and, setting out for Rosetta, began to recross the Desert, appearing like an ocean of sand, but flatter and firmer as to its surface than before. The Arabs, uttering their harsh guttural language, ran chattering by the side of our asses ; until some of them calling out, ‘ *Raschid* ! ’ (or, Rosetta), we perceived its domes and turrets, apparently upon the opposite side of an immense lake or sea, that covered all the intervening space between us and the city. Not having in my own mind at the time any doubt as to the certainty of its being water, and seeing the tall minarets and buildings of Rosetta, with all its groves of dates and sycamores, as perfectly reflected by it as by a mirror, insomuch that even the minutest detail of the architecture, and the trees, might have been thence delineated, I applied to the Arabs to be informed in what manner we were to pass the water. Our interpreter, although a Greek, and, therefore, likely to have been informed of such a spectacle, was as fully convinced as any of us, that we

Repeat Dr. Clarke’s account of the Mirage.

were drawing near to the water's edge, and became indignant, when the Arabs maintained, that within an



hour we should reach Rosetia, by crossing the sands in the direct line we then pursued, and that there was no water. 'What!' said he, giving way to his impatience, 'do you suppose me an idiot, to be persuaded contrary to the evidence of my senses?' The Arabs, smiling, soon pacified him, and completely astonished the whole party, by desiring us to look back at the Desert we had already passed, where we beheld a precisely similar appearance. It was, in fact, the *mirage*, a prodigy to which every one of us were then strangers; although it afterwards became more famil-

iar. Yet, upon no future occasion did we ever behold this extraordinary illusion so marvellously displayed. The view of it afforded us ideas of the horrible despondency to which travellers must sometimes be exposed, who, in traversing the interminable Desert, destitute of water, and perishing with thirst, have sometimes this deceitful prospect before their eyes.’ ”

“ This is a pretty account ; but what did Isaiah mean, when he said, ‘ that the glowing sands should become a pool ? ’ ”

“ I always like, Harry, to hear you inquire after the meaning of things. The prophet was speaking of the blessings which should result from the coming of Messiah. Then, he says ;

‘ The desert and the waste shall be glad ;
And the wilderness shall rejoice and flourish ;
Like the rose shall it beautifully flourish ;
Then shall be unclosed the eyes of the blind ;
And the ears of the deaf shall be opened ;
Then shall the lame bound like the hart ;
And the tongue of the dumb shall sing ;
For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters,
And torrents in the desert :
And the GLOWING SAND shall become a pool.’ ”

Repeat Lowth’s version of Isaiah.

* Lowth’s Version.

“That is, the very mirage shall not only seem water, but shall actually become so, and refresh the people who pass by it : or, without any figure, that, in consequence of the coming and work of Messiah, there should be, even among the lowest and degraded of our race, an astonishing plenitude of blessings ; and these glorious predictions shall assuredly be accomplished.”

“You remind me, father, of ‘The Messiah,’ which you gave me to learn not long since.”

“The subject, Harry, is the same. Who can help saying—

‘Rise, crown’d with light, imperial Salem, rise !
Exalt thy towering head, and lift thine eyes !
See ! a long race thy spacious courts adorn ;
See ! future sons and daughters yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies !
See ! Heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in the flood of day !’ ”

What is the meaning of the version ? Repeat some lines from the Messiah.

THE SIMOOM.

"HAVING noticed the Mirage, I will mention the Simoom, so common in the East. Isaiah represents the Almighty as saying, in reference to the army of Sennacherib, 'I will send a *blast* upon it.' It is supposed, by many, that it was destroyed by this fierce pestilential wind. It is often instantaneously fatal. A traveller in Arabia, alluding to it, says, 'It sometimes happens, that, during an excessive heat, there comes a breath of air still more burning; and then both men and beasts being already overpowered and faint, this increase of heat entirely deprives them of respiration.

"Mr. Bruce refers several times, in his 'Travels,' to this burning wind. He says, 'We had no sooner got into the plains, than we felt great symptoms of the Simoom; and about a quarter before twelve, our prisoner first, and then Idris, called out, 'The Simoom! The Simoom!' My curiosity would not suffer me to fall down without looking behind me; about due south, a little to the east, I saw the coloured haze, as before. It seemed now to be rather less compressed, and to

What does Isaiah represent the Almighty as saying? What is supposed by many? What does a traveller in Arabia say of the Simoom? What does Mr. Bruce say?

have with it a shade of blue ; the edges of it were not defined as those of the former, but like a very thin smoke, with about a yard in the middle tinged with those colours. We all fell upon our faces, and the Simoom passed with a gentle ruffling wind. It continued to blow in this manner till near three o'clock ; so that we were all taken ill that night, and strength was scarcely left us to load the camels and arrange the baggage. Thus God can cut off the proudest host by a blast of wind. Well might the prophet exclaim, ' Who would not fear Thee, O thou King of Nations ?'

GOLD.

" THERE are many allusions to Eastern customs and objects in the Scriptures which one does not observe without attentive thought. I detected one, last evening, which I had not noticed before."

" Will you mention it, father ?"

" Zechariah, in his ninth chapter, and the third verse, says, ' Tyre did build herself a strong hold, and

How can God cut off the proudest host ? What does the prophet exclaim ?
What does Zechariah say in his ninth chapter ?

heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.' At first sight, perhaps, this text might convey an idea of immense riches ; but it will display those riches in a much stronger light, if we consider what a traveller has said of a town of the East. ' The common mud,' says he, ' formed into brick, and dried in the sun, of which the houses are built, have, at some distance, the appearance of white stone. The short duration of such materials is not the only objection to them ; for they make the streets dusty when there is wind ; and dirty when there is rain. These inconveniences are felt at Damascus, which is mostly built in this way.' Maundrell observes, ' that after a violent rain at Damascus, the whole city becomes, by the washing of the houses, as it were, a quagmire.' "

" Looking at the text in this way, gold, like ' the mire of the streets,' would be abundant gold."

WATER SPOUTS.

" I HAVE been putting down several texts to ask you about, father, and I hope you will be so kind as to explain them."

How are the houses built in the East ? What of Damascus after rain ?

“What are they?”

“One is in the forty-second Psalm, and the seventh verse. David says, ‘Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me.’ Did the water-spouts fall on him?”

“No, my dear, not literally so; but his afflictions were such, that he compared them to waves and breakers going over him, and to the water-spouts overwhelming him. It was very natural for him to use this imagery, as expressive of the greatness of his trouble, as Dr. Shaw tells us, that water spouts are more frequent on the Jewish coast than in any other part of the Mediterranean.”

DOOR-WAYS AND GATES.

“I DON’T understand Proverbs xvii. 19. I wish you would explain it; Solomon says, ‘He that exalteth his gate, seeketh destruction.’”

What does David say in the 42d Psalm? To what does he compare his afflictions? Where are water spouts frequent? What allusion is made in Proverbs XVII. 19?

“ It is supposed, and I think with much probability, that here is an allusion to a mode of violent attack which is still prevalent among the Arabs. These banditti are accustomed, if the door-ways are large enough, to ride into the houses of those whom they mean to plunder. To hinder them from doing so, a traveller tells us, that the door of the house in which the French merchants lived at Rama was not three feet high, and that all the door-ways in that town are equally low. A gentleman, referring to his entrance into a monastery near Jerusalem, says, ‘ The passage is so low that it will scarcely admit a horse ; and it is shut by a gate of iron, strongly secured in the inside. As soon as we entered, it was again made fast with various bolts and bars of iron ; a precaution extremely necessary in a desert place, exposed to the incursions and insolent attacks of the Arabs.’ Other travellers give a similar testimony. ‘ The poor miserable Arabs are under the necessity of hewing their houses out of the rock, and cutting very small doors, or openings to them, that they may not be made stables for the Turkish horse, as they pass and repass. We lodged under an arch in a little court, together with our asses ; the

What is a practice among the Arabs ? How are they prevented from entering a door ? What is said of a monastery near Jerusalem ? What does a traveller say of the manner of building among the Arabs ?

door was exceedingly low, to withstand the sudden entrance of the insolent Turks.' So, you see, Harry, that to 'exalt the gate,' or to make a large entrance into a house, would most likely be followed with painful consequences, if not with destruction."

"Thank you, father, you have made it very plain. I could not think what the meaning of the passage was."

"It is probable, that the markets in ancient times were held at the gates of cities, Job xxix. 7; 2 Chron. xviii. 9. It appears, that in the time of our Lord, markets were places of common resort, Matt. xxiii. 7; Mark xii. 38. And it seems likely, that persons of

Job xxix. 7. When I went out to the gate through the city, *when* I prepared my seat in the street.

2 Chron. xviii. 9. And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria.

Matt. xxiii. 7. And greetings in the markets and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi.

Mark xii. 38. And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the Scribes which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the market places.

What would follow exalting the gate in the East? What is probable concerning markets? Repeat verses from Job and Chronicles. When were markets places of common resort? Repeat verses from Matthew and Mark.

different professions lived in streets by themselves, like the booksellers in London, who chiefly reside in Paternoster Row, or St. Paul's Churchyard, as we read of the street which was appropriated to the bakers, in Jer. xxxvii. 21."

[84]

BALANCES.

"WHAT does weighing in the balances mean father?"

"It is not improbable that there is an allusion to a practice that was not uncommon in the East; of weighing the monarch once, or twice, or more times a year, to ascertain the state of the king's health. A traveller, who was at the court of the Emperor of Mogul on his birthday tells us, that in the presence of

Jer. xxxvii. 21. That they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the baker's street, until all the bread in the city were spent.

Dan. v. 27. Sekel; thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting.

What seems likely? Repeat a verse from Jeremiah; and one from Daniel. What practice was common in the East? Give an account of the ceremony of weighing the Emperor of Mogul.

his principal grantees he was weighed in a balance. The ceremony was performed in his palace, in a spacious room, whereinto none were admitted but by special leave. The scales in which he was thus weighed were plated with gold ; and so was the beam, on which they hung by great chains, made likewise of that precious metal. The king, sitting in one of them, was weighed first against silver coin, which immediately afterwards was distributed among the poor ; then he was weighed against gold ; after that, against jewels, each of which were laid in silver bags on the contrary scale. ‘ When I saw him in the balance,’ says Sir T. Roe, ‘ I thought on Belshazzar, who was found too light. By his weight, his physicians presume to guess of the present state of his body, of which they always speak flatteringly.’ ”

“ It seems as if there were an allusion to this practice in the words addressed to Belshazzar ; but you have not told me in what he was ‘ found wanting.’ ”

“ These expressions mean, that he was very far from being what he ought. He was wanting in reverence for the Divine Majesty, in love to Him, in regard for His glory ; he was found wanting in temperance,

Where is allusion made to this practice of weighing the monarch ? In what was Belshazzar found wanting ?

and in becoming views for the real welfare of the subjects committed to his care. I am afraid, Harry, that the best of our race, and how much more than those who are the most faulty, would be found in similar circumstances, if they were weighed in the balances of the sanctuary,—that is, if their characters were estimated by the decisions of the Scriptures. You know, even Job said, when thinking of his sins before God, ‘Behold, I am vile!’”

SALUTATION.

“I HAVE another passage to mention out of Daniel?”

“What is it?”

“When the wise men came into the presence of the king, they said, ‘O king, live for ever.’ You know father, he could not live for ever.”

“True, Harry. It was a piece of Eastern flattery; yet it is capable of a very good meaning. We may regard it as a prayer; as if they had said, May the king live, and be happy for ever. These are blessings

How would the best men probably appear under the same circumstances? What did Job say? What did the wise men say to the king?

which, you know, Harry, we frequently ask God to bestow on ourselves. 'But this ancient wish and address to the throne seems most manifestly to have taken its rise from an ancient and original apprehension, that those who could obtain favour and mercy through the promised Messiah would really live for ever ; and have not only as great, but greater powers to be useful hereafter, than they have had on earth.'"

"Something like this is still kept up in the Eastern courts. Elphinstone, in his account of the kingdom of Caubul, says, 'On coming in sight of the king, we all pulled off our hats, and made a low bow ; we then held up our hands towards Heaven, as if praying for the king, and afterwards advanced to the fountain, where the minister repeated our names, ending thus : 'They have come from Europe as ambassadors to your Majesty. May your misfortunes be turned upon me !' Some form of prayer like this is always used in addressing the king. It corresponds to the 'O king, live for ever !' of the ancient Persians."

"The common modes of salutation in the East were and are very different from those among us. It appears from many parts of the Scriptures, that when

What may we regard this salutation ? From what did it take its rise ? What does Elphinstone say of the kingdom of Caubul ? How did the Persians address their king ? What appears from the Scriptures ?

people met each other, they said, 'The Lord be with thee !' or, 'The Lord bless thee !' or, 'Blessed be thou of the Lord !' or, 'Peace be with thee !' This term they used as including in it all that was good or desirable.

"The apostle Peter exhorted those to whom he wrote to be 'courteous.' Every real Christian will be so ; he cannot be otherwise. True piety will influence a man to be all that is amiable in all the relations of life ; pursuing 'whatsoever things are just, true, pure, lovely, and of good report.'

"Our Lord also directed His disciples when they entered into a house, to salute it, and to say, 'Peace be to this house !' But yet he said to the same individuals, when He sent them out to preach the Gospel, 'Salute no man by the way !' His meaning doubtless was, that they were not to waste their time in empty ceremonies, but to hasten on to the scene of labour, as those who had business of the utmost importance to execute. This, also, was evidently the meaning of, the prophet, in 2 Kings iv. 29."

2 Kings iv. 29. If thou meet any man, salute him not ; and if any salute thee, answer him not again.

To what did the apostle Peter exhort men ? What effect will true piety have on a man ? What did our Lord direct his disciples to do ? What did this direction mean ? Repeat a verse from Kings.

MOLOCH.

"I WANT now to ask you about Leviticus xviii. 21. 'Thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Moloch ?' Who was Moloch, father ?"

"A dreadful idol god of the East. A learned Jew gives the following description of him ; 'It was a statue with the head of an ox, and the hands stretched out as a man's who opens his hands to receive something from another. It was hollow within ; and there were seven chapels raised, before which the idol was erected. He that offered a fowl, or young pigeon, went into the first chapel ; if he offered a sheep or a lamb, he went into the second ; if a ram, into the third ; if a calf, into the fourth ; if a bullock, into the fifth ; if an ox, into the sixth ; but he only who offered his own son, went into the seventh chapel, and kissed the idol. The child was placed before the idol, and a fire made under the statue till it became red-hot. Then the priest took the child, and put him into the glowing hands of Moloch. And lest the parents should hear his cries, they beat drums to drown the noise. The place, therefore, was called Topheth from a word signifying drums.'"

Who was Moloch ? Describe him.

"How very shocking!"

"It is indeed, Harry. Well does Milton say,

'Moloch ! horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears !'

"But idolatry is altogether an awful subject. How degrading to rational beings, that they should pass by the great, and good, and wise, and just, and gracious God, 'the King eternal, immortal, invisible,' the Creator, the Father and the Friend of man, to bow down to dumb idols, which 'have eyes, but see not ; and ears, but hear not ; and hands, but handle not ; and feet, but walk not.'"

"And be so cruel!"

"True, Harry. Dr. Buchanan tells us, that he knew he was approaching the temple of Jaggernaut, the Moloch of the East, sixty miles before he actually arrived at it, by the human bones which he saw every where bleaching on the sands. How thankful ought we to be for the pure light of Divine Revelation ! and how ought we to respect good men, of every denomination, who leave their native land to do away such abominations from the face of the earth !"

What does Milton say of Moloch ? What is the effect of idolatry ? What does Dr. Buchanan tell us ?

GARMENTS.

“WAS not the dress of the people in the East very peculiar, father?”

“No doubt it was. It is curious to think how dress has varied since our first parents were clothed with skins in Paradise; though a large proportion of our race, who are uncivilized, still wear them.”

“And they would be very comfortable to the Esquimaux, whom Captain Parry speaks of in his Journal; for they are always among snow and ice,—would they not?”

“Surely they would; and he tells us that they are thus clothed. But the people in the East are generally clothed in a much superior way. Joseph’s coat, wrought on purpose for him by the indulgent fondness of his father, cannot but remind one of a handsome Scottish plaid, such as I have seen over the shoulders of the chiefs of the clans in the northern Highlands.

“Dr. Shaw says, ‘The usual size of the upper garment worn in the East is six yards long, and five or six feet wide. They not only wear it by day, but they cover themselves with it at night, like the Israel-

How are the Esquimaux clothed? Of what does Joseph’s coat remind us? What does Dr. Shaw say of oriental dresses?

ites spoken of Deut. xxiv. 13. Indeed such a covering was necessary in those countries, as, although the heat of the day is very great, the nights are generally cold. Such a garment was loose and troublesome to the wearer ; he was obliged to tuck it up, and fold it round him. This made a girdle necessary, wherever they were actively employed ; and it explains the Scripture expression, ‘ having our loins girded,’ when called upon to be active in performing any duty.’ ”

“ I think I have read, that the purse used to be in the girdle.”

“ It was ; this was usually made of worsted, and richly wrought, Prov. xxxi. 24. Girdles passed several times round the body, and one end was sewed up as a purse.

Deut. xxiv. 13. In any case, thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee.

Proverbs xxxi. 24. She maketh fine linen and selleth it ; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

Repeat a verse from Deuteronomy. What is the climate in the East ? Why is a girdle necessary to an eastern garment ? What Scripture expression is there concerning it ? Where was the purse carried ? Repeat a verse from Proverbs. What is said of girdles ?

“Under the upper garment; there was another which more closely fitted the body. It is supposed



that our Saviour's coat, 'woven without seam,' was of this kind. Over all, the Jews wore a sort of cloak, with a hood to it, to preserve them from the rain or the cold. These long outer garments were laid aside, when persons wished to engage in any labour. Our Lord did so, when he washed his disciples' feet. These seem to have been the garments which were spread in the way, when the Redeemer entered in His triumph into Jerusalem. The recollection of long dresses of this fashion explains many passages of the

What was under the upper garment? What coat did our Saviour wear? What cloak did the Jews wear? When were these long garments laid aside? What were spread in the Redeemer's way?

Sacred Scriptures ; such as, Gen. xxvii. 15. ; 1 Sam. xviii. 4. ; Luke xv. 22.

“A great number of splendid garments were regarded as among the greatest treasures of the East. Our Lord represents Dives not only as ‘faring sumptuously every day, but as being clothed in purple and fine linen.’”

“Joseph must have been a very rich man, father ; how many clothes he must have had !”

“What makes you think so, Harry ?”

“Why, the Bible says, that after he had made himself known to his brethren, he gave them wagons to fetch his father into Egypt ; and ‘to all of them he gave each man changes of raiment ; but to Benjamin

Gen. xxvii. 15. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son.

1 Sam. xviii. 4. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow and to his girdle.

Luke xv. 22. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.

What explains many passages of Scripture ? How are a number of garments considered in the East ? How is Dives represented ? Why must Joseph have had many garments ? What does the Bible say of him ?

he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.'

"Changes of raiment and garments were, and still are, among the principal treasures of the rich men in the East. Naaman, when he left Syria, to visit Elisha, 'took with him ten talents of silver, and ten changes of raiment.' It is said, that, when Solomon came to the throne, 'they brought away every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, and harness, and spices, horses and mules, a rate, year by year.'

"When a French ambassador had an audience of the Sultan, he, and his suite, after they had been regaled with coffee, sweetmeats, and perfumes, 'were clothed in vests of silver brocade, with large silk flowers; and to those who were admitted into the apartment with them, they gave others of brocade, almost all of silk, except some slight gold or silver flowers, according to the custom usually observed towards all foreign ministers.'

"Chardin says, that 'kings constantly give splendid raiment to ambassadors, and send them to princes. They pay great attention to the quality or merit of

What is said of Naaman? Of Solomon? How did a Sultan entertain a French ambassador? What does Chardin say of kings?

those to whom these vestments are given ; which are always answerable to their rank. The kings of Persia have great wardrobes, in which are always many hundreds of habits ready designed for presents, and sorted. There are envoys who have received twenty-five or thirty of them for themselves and attendants. A king of Persia, in 1675, sent a very handsome present to a young prince who came to visit him ; among other things, there were five complete suits of raiment.'

" But not only have great princes an abundance of beautiful garments ; this is the case with all persons of any rank in society. This subject illustrates a very striking passage in the New Testament ; I refer to the parable of the marriage-feast, Matt. xxii. There was a person present who had not on 'a wedding garment ;' and the king, when he saw him, was much displeased. 'Persons making an entertainment,' says Doddridge, 'sometimes furnished the habits in which the guests were to appear, as appears from the 'Odyssey' of Homer. We may therefore conclude, not only from the magnificence of the preparations to which we must suppose the wardrobe of the prince corresponded,

Have all persons many fine garments ? What does this fact illustrate ? What does Doddridge say ? What may we conclude ?

but likewise from the following circumstance of the resentment against this guest, that a robe was offered, but refused by him. A circumstance, which, as a great writer remarks, is admirably suited to the method of God's dealing with us ; who indeed requires holiness, in order to our receiving the benefits of the Gospel, but is graciously pleased to work it in us by His Holy Spirit ; and therefore may justly resent and punish our neglect of so great a favour."

"I think, father, I like the Scriptures better and better, every time I hear you talk about the Eastern customs."

"I hope you do, Harry ; and the reason is plain,—because, I hope you understand them better. We cannot be expected to feel much interest in that which we do not understand."

"But how gay and fine the garments are in the East !"

"They are, indeed. We should not, however, forget, that it is the mark of a little mind, to be vain of mere outward show. A man is still the same, in whatever raiment he may be clad. Very beautiful garments are often worn by ignorant and worthless persons ;

What is God's method of dealing with us ? Are the garments of the East gay and fine ? What must we not forget ?

and, on the contrary, homely apparel may array individuals of the highest virtue and excellence.”

“You remind me, father, of some lines which mother taught me, when I was a very little boy,—

‘The tulip and the butterfly
Appear in gayer coats than I ;
Let me be drest fine as I will,
Flies, worms, and flowers exceed me still.

‘Then will I set my heart to find
Inward adornings of the mind ;
Knowledge and virtue, truth and grace ;
These are the robes of richest dress.

‘No more shall worms with me compare ;
This is the raiment angels wear ;
The Son of God, when here below,
Put on this blest apparel too.

‘It never fades, it ne’er grows old,
Nor fears the rain, nor moth, nor mold ;
It takes no spot, but still refines ;
The more ’tis worn, the more it shines.

‘In this on earth would I appear,
Then go to Heav’n, and wear it there ;
God will approve it in His sight ;
’Tis His own work, and His delight.’ ”

Repeat some verses of poetry.

THRESHING.

"HAVE you seen the new machine with which they are threshing out the corn which they got in yesterday, Harry ?"

"Yes, father ; John shewed it me, last evening, and he explained how it worked. I was much pleased with it."

"But you saw many fine pieces of mechanism when you visited your cousin at Manchester, did you not ? The perfection of machinery, I think, is at Manchester."

"Yes ; I shall never forget the spinning jennies."

"They are indeed exceedingly useful. Do you know whom they were invented by ?"

"No, father."

"You ought to have known this. I have often told you, that the way by which I have acquired much knowledge is, by making inquiries about every thing which I see. Never be afraid of asking questions ; artists and workmen are pleased to answer them, because they think you feel an interest in their labours ; and thus you gain knowledge very cheaply and very

Who invented the spinning-jenny ?

delightfully. James Hargreaves, a carpenter of Blackburn, constructed the first spinning-jenny in 1767 ; so that now a little girl will work one hundred and twenty spindles. To the indelible disgrace of his age and country, he died in a workhouse at Nottingham.

“ When I was at Manchester, I gained very much knowledge on the subject of machinery, which delighted and astonished me. John Pollard, of that town, in 1792, spun on the *mule*, as it is called, no fewer than two hundred and seventy-eight hanks of yarn, forming a thread of two hundred and thirty-three thousand five hundred and twenty yards ; or upwards of one hundred and thirty-two thousand five hundred and twenty yards ; or upwards of one hundred and thirty-two miles in length ; and all this from a single pound of raw cotton ! ”

“ How wonderful ! ”

“ But don’t you recollect any other machines which were shewn you, when at your cousin’s ? ”

“ No, father, except the power looms. ”

“ Except the power looms ! Why, Harry, what would you wish to see ? They are the most astonishing productions of all, Harry. Mr. Cartwright, a clergy-

Where did he die ? How much yarn was spun in Manchester in 1792 from one pound of raw cotton ? Who invented the power loom, and in what year ?

man of Kent, invented the power-loom, or weaving-mill, in 1787. The results of this machine are indeed amazing. But we will talk of British machinery more at large another time. Let us think of the threshing-machine."

"It is a new invention, father,—is it not?"

"Yes; and this method of threshing forms a wonderful contrast to that which prevailed in the earlier ages of the world, and which is many times referred to in the Scriptures."

"Will you mention a passage or two, father?"

"Speaking of the husbandman, the Prophet Isaiah says,

"For his God rightly instructeth him; he furnisheth him with knowledge ;

"The dill is not beaten out with the corn-drag ;

"Nor is the wheel of the wain made to turn on the cummin ;

"But the dill is beaten out with the staff ;

"And the cummin with the flail ; but the bread-corn with the threshing-wain.

"But not for ever will he continue thus to thresh it ;

"Nor to vex it with the wheel of his wain ;

"Nor to bruise it with the hoofs of his cattle.

Repeat some verses from Isaiah concerning the manner of threshing.

“ ‘This also proceedeth from Jehovah, God of Hosts ;

“ ‘He showeth himself wonderful in counsel, great in operation.’* ”

“ ‘Four methods,’ says Bishop Lowth, ‘of threshing are here mentioned by different instruments ; the *flail*, the *drag*, the *wain*, and the *treading of the cattle*. The staff, or flail, was used for such grain as was too tender to be treated in the other methods. The drag consisted of a frame of strong planks, made rough at the bottom with hard stones or iron : it was drawn by horses or oxen over the corn-sheaves spread on the floor, the drivers sitting upon it. The wain was much like the former, but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges like a saw ; by which it should seem that the axle was armed with iron teeth or saw-like wheels throughout. Such a machine is used at present in Egypt for the same purpose : it moves upon three rollers, armed with iron teeth, or wheels, to cut the straw. In Syria, they make use of the drag, constructed in the very same manner as above described. This not only forced out the grain, but cut the straw in pieces for

‘How many methods of threshing are mentioned by Bishop Lowth ? What is the staff or flail ? What is the drag ? What is the wain ? What do they use in Syria ?’

* Lowth’s *Is.* xxviii. 26—29.

fodder for the cattle; for, in the Eastern countries, they have no hay. This last method is well known from the Law of Moses, which forbids 'the ox to be muzzled when he treadeth out the corn.'

"Thus Isaiah uses this subject as he does every other which he touches, in the most striking manner. In his twenty-fifth chapter he says,

" 'For the hand of JEHOVAH shall give rest upon this mountain ;

" 'And Moab shall be threshed in his place,

" 'As the straw is threshed under the wheels of the car.'

" 'That is, he will appear for the salvation and establishment of his people ; but that he will utterly confound and destroy their enemies, even

" 'As the straw is threshed under the wheels of the car.'

"How striking and impressive is the comparison !"

"You always praise Isaiah, father, whenever you quote him. I think you admire him more than any other writer in the Old Testament."

"You are right, Harry. In the *Old* Testament, you say ; you imagine, then, that I have a favourite in the *New* also, I suppose ?"

Have they hay in the East ? What does the Law of Moses forbid ? Repeat some verses from Isaiah.

"Yes, father, I am sure of this. John is your favourite in the New Testament."

"Perhaps there is some truth in what you say, Harry ; though I greatly value the whole of the Book of God."

"Do they ever muzzle the oxen in the East ?"

"No ; it is a remarkable fact, that they never were, nor are they muzzled to this day."

"What is meant by the command that we are not to muzzle the ox ?"

"The Apostle applies the text to the ministers of the Gospel, as an intimation, that it is becoming, that those who prepare food for others, should not be denied a portion for themselves. But to return more particularly to the subject ; Shaw informs us, that in Barbary the cattle are employed in treading out the corn."

"But you have not said any thing about the barns of the people in the East, father."

"Their threshing floors were usually, and still are, round level plats of ground in the open air. This was evidently the case with Gideon's floor ; and also that

Are oxen muzzled in the East ? What is meant by the command that we are not to muzzle the ox ? What does Shaw tell us ? What were the threshing floors of the East ?

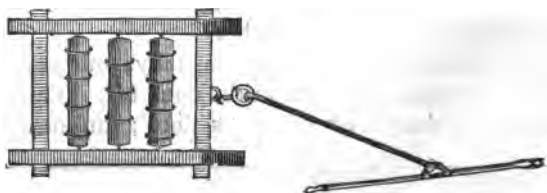
of Araunah, or else he could not have had an altar on it, to offer sacrifice. This made them very convenient for winnowing; as they had all the advantage of the free gales.

“Homer describes the method of threshing, which was common in his times ;

‘As with autumnal harvests cover’d o’er,
And thick bestrewn lies Ceres’ sacred floor;
When round and round, with never-wearied pain,
The trampling steers beat out th’ unnumber’d grain.’

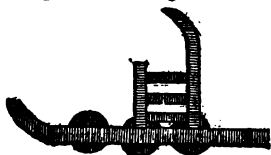
Iliad, xx. 495.

“In Egypt,” says Sonnini, “the use of the flail is unknown. To separate the grain from the straw, the inhabitants prepare with a mixture of earth and pigeons’ dung spacious floors, well beat, and very clean. The rice is spread thereon in thick layers; they have then a sort of cart, formed of two pieces



What does Homer say of this mode of threshing? How is threshing performed in Egypt?

of wood joined together by two cross pieces; it is almost in the shape of sledges, which serve for the



conveyance of burdens in the streets of our cities. Between the longer sides of this sledge are fixed transversely three rows of small wheels, made of solid iron,



and narrowed off towards their circumference. On the fore part is a wide and high seat, upon which a

man sits, driving two oxen, harnessed to the machine. The whole moves on slowly, and always in a circular direction, over every part of the heap of rice, until there remains no more grain in the straw. When it is thus beaten, it is spread in the air to be dried. Several men walk abreast to turn it over, each of whom, with his foot, makes a furrow in the layer of grain ; so that, in a few moments, the whole mass is moved, and that part which was underneath is again exposed to the air."

"The people in the East, father, do not seem to have made much improvement in things ; though so many years have passed away."

"This is the truth. Yet the sameness of their customs and manners finely illustrates the meaning of the Scriptures, and proves even the minute fidelity of the sacred penmen. The people in the eastern part of the world appear to be stationary in every thing. They go on precisely in the track of their ancestors. They make but very little improvement in any thing, and no discoveries in science. Europe, though not to be named with Asia, in reference to population, is yet a far more important part of the world, in almost every point of view. Our little island, you know, holds an

What is said of the manners and customs of the people in the East ?

immense portion of the East under its dominion. I scarcely know a more striking illustration of the famous axiom of Bacon, that 'knowledge is power.'"

"Then, father, we should try to know every thing, —should we not?"

"Yes, Harry; we should be constantly endeavouring to excel in knowledge. This is one important point, in which the human race is distinguished from the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. They acquire no information worthy of being mentioned as knowledge. But man is capable of examining and of knowing all things, and especially he has a mind capable of knowing and of loving God. 'The spirit of the Almighty hath given him understanding.'"

"You said, father, that knowledge is one thing, by which we are distinguished from the animals around us. Will you tell me some other?"

"Think, yourself, Harry, and you will find many. I will however mention one. Man has a capacity of distinguishing between right and wrong, of approving the one, and of abhorring the other; hence he is the subject of God's moral government, and evidently be-

Do they make any discoveries in science? How does Europe compare with Asia? What does Bacon say of knowledge? How is the human race distinguished from beasts and birds? What hath the spirit of the Almighty given to man? In what other way is man distinguished from the brute?

comes an accountable creature. Hence arise our obligations to improve our time and our talents for the great purposes for which they were given."

"You often talk, father, of our accountability."

"Those, Harry, who have to give an account to God, should often think of the solemn subject, and not only think of it, but fervently pray that they may appear at that reckoning 'with joy, and not with grief.'"

POSTURE.

"In the discourse which you read in the family on the Sunday evening, father, it was said, that the people in the East used to lie on couches at their meals."

"They did so, Harry; and this is still the case in many parts of the East. And this circumstance will illustrate many passages of the Scriptures."

"In the Book of Samuel, it is said, that 'David sat before the Lord.' Pococke, Mr. Harmer remarks, has given the figure of a person half sitting and half

What is said in the Book of Samuel? What ought we to do therefore? What should those do who are to account to God? How do the people of the East place themselves at their meals? What does this fact illustrate? Repeat a verse from Esther.

kneeling ; that is, kneeling so-as to rest his body on his heels. This is the manner in which inferior persons sit at this day before great men, and is considered as a very humble posture. In this manner, probably, David sat before the Lord, when he went into the sanctuary to bless God for His promise respecting his family."

"But I referred to their posture at meals."

"Well, Harry, we will notice it. They were accustomed to have three tables ; two long ones joined to one shorter at one end ; the other end was open, and



What has Pococke given ? How do inferior persons sit before great men ?
How did David probably sit before the Lord ?

was very convenient for the approach of the servants to the guests, and in many instances the tables were arranged so as to form a half circle, around which were rows of couches, on which persons got up by the aid of a footstool, and placed themselves in a recumbent posture. This view of the subject finely illustrates several passages in the Gospels. In the seventh of Luke, it is said, that a woman in the city who knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him, weeping; and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment."

"It is said that she stood at Jesus' feet *behind* him; but were not his feet before him?"

"According to our views and habits, you are right, Harry. Our feet at table are before us. But as our Lord was reclining on a couch, the woman stood at His feet behind Him."

"I see how it was, father; and so she could readily come to his feet, and wash them, and wipe them with the hairs of her head. But she could not have done so, if they had sat at meals as we do now."

How were the tables arranged in the East? What is said in the 7th of Luke? Why is it said that Jesus' feet were behind him?

“ So our Lord took a basin, and went round after supper, and washed his disciples’ feet. You see, the feet, as they reclined on their couches at meals, were easily accessible ; more so than any parts of their bodies ; and this view renders the Scripture narrative easy to be understood.”

“ Your account of the woman washing our Lord’s feet is very plain, when we consider that they almost lay down on couches to their meals among the Jews.”

MOURNING.

“ I WANTED to ask you, father, about the minstrels, and the people who made a great noise in the chamber where the damsel lay dead ; and whom our Lord, you know, turned out of the room ; Who were they ? Were they her relations ?”

“ I apprehend not, Harry. I think they must have been people who were hired to mourn and make a noise.”

How does it appear easy for our Lord to have washed his disciples’ feet ?
Who were the minstrels who were in the chamber of the damsel who lay dead ?
For what purpose are some persons hired ?

“Hired to mourn!”

“Yes, Harry; there are still persons whose business it is to bewail the dead. So we read in Amos, ‘Call such as are skilful of lamentation, to wailing.’ ‘There are women,’ says Captain Lyon, in his Travels in Northern Africa, ‘whose sole employment it is to attend the house of mourning, where they howl, lament, and tear their hair and faces in a barbarous manner. Their cries continue with very little intermission during three days; and the additional din occasioned by their repeatedly beating wooden boxes, or pots, is truly horrible.’”

“Why what good could this do?”

“None at all. Yet it is still the practice in the East. Dr. Clarke says, speaking of these hired mourners, their noise ‘began about sunset, and continued with little intermission, not only all the night, but during many succeeding nights and days. We were at first doubtful whether the sounds we heard were expressions of joy or of lamentation. A sort of chorus, mixed with screams, yet regulated by the beating of tambourines, now swelling upon the ear, now expiring in cadences, was repeated continually; and as often

What do we read in Amos? What does Captain Lyon say of women in Northern Africa? What does Dr. Clarke say of hired mourners?

as it seemed to cease, we heard it renewed with increased vehemence. It was the usual ceremony of bewailing a deceased person by means of female mourners hired for the occasion; they exhibited the most frightful distortions; having their hair disheveled, their clothes torn, and their countenances daubed with paint and dirt; they were relieved at intervals by other women.' ”*

“ This seems very foolish.”

“ Yes, and very sinful too; to affect a sorrow which they do not feel, and merely for a little paltry gain, is sad hypocrisy. When we lose a friend, we cannot but mourn; yet it is our duty to be resigned to the will of God.”

“ It is said in the Scriptures, that the Egyptians mourned for Jacob threescore and ten days. His funeral is described in very remarkable terms. The sacred historian informs us, that when Joseph went up to the land of Canaan to bury his father, there went with him ‘ all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt; and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father’s house; and both chariots and horse-

Why is this practice sinful ?

* Clarke’s Travels, vol. iii. p. 72.

men, a very great company. And they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation; and he made a mourning for his father seven days.' When Sir John Chardin was at Ispahan, in 1676, the mistress in the adjoining house died. 'The instant she expired,' he says, 'about thirty persons set up such a lamentation as quite alarmed him; and they repeated these wailings at intervals, for forty days. In like manner, many of the Jews came to mourn with Mary and Martha after the loss of their brother; they followed Mary to the grave, supposing that she was going to weep there.'

"On these occasions, there were often very unjustifiable practices. The people cut themselves, and tore off their hair. This was forbidden by the law, Deut. xiv. 1. The Prophet Jeremiah refers to this, chap. xvi. 6.

Deut. xiv. 1. Ye are the children of the Lord your God; ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

Jer. xvi. 6. Both the great and the small shall die in this land; they shall not be buried, neither shall men lament them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them.

How long did the Egyptians mourn for Joseph? Describe the funeral. What does Sir John Chardin say of a funeral at Ispahan? Who mourned with Martha and Mary? What did the people do in cases of mourning? Repeat a verse from Deuteronomy, and one from Jeremiah.

"When the Israelites were smitten at Ai, it is said, that 'Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the Ark of the Lord, until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.' This must have been very unpleasant, father.

"Truly so, Harry ; but it was very expressive of their humiliation before God, and of the greatness of their affliction. It was by no means uncommon among the people in the East. When Job's friends approached him, 'they lifted up their voice and wept ; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust on their heads towards Heaven.' So the king of Nineveh, when the prophet announced the destruction of that city, arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes."

"Did the Romans or the Greeks express their grief in this manner ?"

"Yes, both these nations did so. Virgil, speaking of Latinus, says,

——— 'He tears his garments as he goes,
Both for the public and his private woes ;

What did Joshua do when the Israelites were smitten ? How did Job's friends approach him ? What did the king of Nineveh do ? How did the Romans and Greeks express their grief ? Repeat some verses from Virgil.

With filth his venerable beard be-mears,
And sordid dust deforms his silver hairs.'

"Homer also, when speaking of Achilles bewailing the loss of Patroclus, says,

'Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread
The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head ;
His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears.'

"Thus also the same Poet represents Priam bewailing the loss of his son Hector :

——'With frantic hands he spread
A show'r of ashes o'er his neck and head.'

"Many other instances might be selected of the same nature. Yet Christians, to whom God has given His gracious promises of mercy, ought not to mourn thus immoderately, and as the heathen ; they ought rather, when in trouble, to say with Eli, 'It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good !' Or, in the language of that beautiful and comprehensive prayer which our Lord taught His disciples, 'Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven !'

Repeat some verses from Homer. How did Priam bewail the loss of Hector ?
How ought Christians to mourn ? What ought they to say in trouble ?

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

1 KINGS ii. 9.

“You know, Harry, I have often remarked, that passages of Scripture, which, at first sight seem strange and difficult, when examined by a devout critic, not only appear to be excellent sense, but are really in a high degree beautiful.

“I met with a fine illustration of these observations yesterday, in reading Dr. Kennicott’s Remarks on 1 Kings ii. 9. In this passage, David is represented as finishing his days with a command to Solomon to slay Shimei ; a most unchristian mandate, to say the least, because, you know, our Lord has enjoined us to love our enemies. Indeed, to do so, was contrary to David’s own solemn engagement ; for he had sworn,

1 Kings ii. 9. Now therefore hold him not guiltless ; for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do to him ; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.

What may be said of many passages of Scripture ? What is David represented to say to Solomon ? Repeat a verse from Kings. Why was it an unchristian mandate ? What had David sworn ?

even by the Lord, that he would not put Shimei to death. 'When the passage is duly considered,' says Dr. Kennicott, 'it will appear highly probable, that an injury has been done by our translation to this illustrious character. It is not uncommon in the Hebrew language, to omit the negative in a second part of a sentence, and to consider it as repeated, when it has been once expressed, and is followed by the connecting particle. The necessity of so very considerable an alteration, as inserting the particle *not*, may be here confirmed by some other instances. Thus Psalm i. 5. 'The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, *nor* sinners in the congregation of the righteous.' If, then, there are in fact many such instances, the question is, whether the negative here expressed in the former part of David's command, may not be understood so as to be repeated in the latter part; and if this *may* be, a strong reason will be added, why it *should* be so interpreted. The passage will run thus, 'Behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, who cursed me; but I swear to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death by the sword. Now, therefore, hold him not guiltless; but bring *not* down his hoary head to

What does Dr. Kennicott think highly probable? What is common in the Hebrew language? Repeat a verse from Psalms. How might David's command be interpreted?

the grave with blood.' Now, if the language itself will admit this construction, the sense thus given to the sentence derives a very strong support from the context. For, how did Solomon understand this charge? Did he kill Shimei in consequence of it? Certainly he did not. Knowing that he ought to be carefully watched, he confined him to a particular spot in Jerusalem for the remainder of his life. It is most pleasing, that this text admits of so unexceptionable an explication. It is most unseemly for any man to die in the very act of malice and revenge. But have you any passages, Harry, which you wish me to explain?"

"Yes, father; in Solomon's description of the virtuous woman, in Proverbs, it is said, that, 'her candle goeth not out by night;' what does he mean?"

"That industry is a distinguished feature in her character; that she not only improved the day, but also a great part of the night. You recollect, that the poor negro woman, who so kindly entertained Mungo Park, spun and sang for a long time after he was laid down to rest on his mat. And do not you recollect the passage we read in the eighth Æneid, a short time

How is this construction supported in the context? What did Solomon do with Shimei? How does Solomon describe a virtuous woman? What does this mean? What did the negro woman do, who took care of Mungo Park?

since, which presents us with a similar picture? Virgil, speaking of the middle of the night, says, it is

‘The time when early housewives leave the bed
When living embers on the hearth they spread ;
Supply the lamp, and call the maids to rise ;’

he ludicrously adds,

‘With yawning mouths, and with half-open’d eyes,
They ply the distaff by the winking light,
And to their daily labour add the night ;
Thus frugally they earn their children’s bread.’ ”

“But to return to the beautiful description of the virtuous woman to which you have referred, it is said, that ‘her clothing is of silk and purple.’ This, no doubt, was fine cotton, for silk was not known at that time. Thirteen hundred years afterwards, the Roman emperor, Aurelian, refused the Empress a silk gown, on account of its cost, so that we are sure it could not have been common among the Jews in the time of Solomon.

“I must also notice the twenty-third verse. It is said, ‘She is not afraid of the snow for her household ; for all her household are clothed with scarlet.’ The

Repeat some lines from Virgil. What was the virtuous woman said to be clothed in ? What was doubtless her dress ? Why did Aurelian refuse the Empress a silk gown ? What is said of her in the 23d verse ?

marginal reading says, 'with double garments;' a much better reason surely, why they are not afraid of the snow and the cold."

"I wanted to ask you, father, why the publican smote upon his breast?" Luke xviii. 13.

"It was an expression of deep sorrow on account of his sins. The practice is not unfrequently mentioned by both the Greek and Latin writers, as descriptive of great affliction. Tacitus, referring to a person who was in much anguish, says, 'He stretched forth his hands, he prostrated himself on the ground, rent his garments, beat his breast, and with tears and groans endeavoured to mitigate resentment.' Your question had reference to the posture of the publican; do you recollect his prayer? 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!'

"It is an important remark of good critics, that the original terms rendered 'Be merciful to me' literally

Luke xviii. 13. And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a sinner.

How is this explained in the marginal reading? Repeat a verse from Luke |
What practice is mentioned by the Greek and Latin writers? What does |
Socrates say? What was the prayer of the publican? |

signify, 'Be propitious toward me through sacrifice;' or, 'Let an atonement be made for me; I am a sinner, and cannot be saved but in this way.' The verb is used in exactly the same sense by the best Greek writers. Herodotus employs it, when recording the fact, that Cræsus made an atonement to the god at Delphos by sacrifices. This is a very important criticism. Thus we see at once the reason why our Lord said, that the publican 'went down to his house justified rather than the other;' he sought for mercy through an atonement for sin; which was the only way in which God had from the beginning purposed to save sinners. But have you any other passage, Harry?"

"Yes, I wanted to know, why Paul told those who were binding him, that he was a Roman citizen,' Acts xxii. 25.

"Because a citizen of Rome, at that period, was a most important character, and possessed very great

Acts xxii. 25. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?

What do the words, 'Be merciful to me,' literally signify? How does Herodotus use them? What did our Lord say of the publican? Why did Paul tell those who were binding him that he was a Roman citizen? Repeat a verse from Acts.

privileges. Adams, in his 'Roman Antiquities,' remarks, 'that Roman citizens were secured against the tyrannical treatment of the magistrates, first by the right of appealing from them to the people, and that the person who appealed should in no manner be punished till the people determined the matter ; but chiefly by the assistance of their tribunes. None but the whole Roman people could pass sentence on the life of a Roman citizen. No magistrate was allowed to punish him by stripes, or capitally. The single expression, 'I am a Roman citizen !' checked their most severe decrees.'

"Cicero, in one of his 'Orations,' has a very memorable sentence or two, on this very subject. 'In the midst of the forum of Messina,' says he, 'a Roman citizen was beaten with rods ; in the mean time, amidst his pangs, and the clashing of the rods, no groan of the wretched man was heard, no voice but this, I am a Roman citizen ! By thus mentioning his citizenship, he thought he should have put an end to his stripes and torments.' This was the reason why Paul told the chief captain, that he was a Roman citizen. The captain became intimidated by his exclamation, as he

What does Adams remark ? What does Cicero say in one of his orations ?

no doubt knew it was a high crime that a Roman citizen should be bound.

“ In Isaiah xlv. 5, the prophet declares, that ‘ one shall say, I am the Lord’s ; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord.’ Bishop Lowth observes, that here is an allusion to the marks, which were made by punctures rendered indelible by fire, or by staining, upon the hand, or some other part of the body ; signifying the state or character of the person, and to whom he belonged ; the slave was marked with the name of his master ; the soldier with that of his commander ; and the idolater with the name or ensign of his god. In the earlier ages, many professed Christians marked their wrists, or their arms, with the sign of the Cross, or with the name of Christ.’

“ Dr. Doddridge’s remarks on this text are well worthy of notice. He says, ‘ Some very celebrated translators and critics understand the words which we render, ‘ Subscribe with his hand unto the Lord,’ in a different sense to that in which our English version has given them. They would rather render them, ‘ Another shall write upon his hand, I am the Lord’s ;’

Why was the captain intimidated when he heard that Paul was a Roman citizen ? Repeat a verse from Isaiah. What does Bishop Lowth observe ? What does Dr. Doddridge say of this verse of Isaiah ?

and they suppose it refers to a custom which formerly prevailed in the East, of stamping the name of the general on the soldier, or that of the master on the slave. As this name was sometimes borne on the forehead, so, at other times, on the hand; and it is certain that several Scriptures are to be explained by this allusion. From hence it seems to have grown into a custom amongst some idolatrous nations, when solemnly devoting themselves to the service of any deity, to be initiated into it by receiving some marks in their flesh, which might never wear out. This interpretation the original will certainly bear; and it here makes a very strong and beautiful sense; since every true Christian has a sacred and indelible character upon him, which shall never be erased.

“Another passage I lately noticed is in the seventy-second Psalm. It is there said, that in the times of the Messiah, to whom the whole Psalm refers, ‘They of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.’ People who have never been in the East would not understand the comparison. Travellers tell us, that the inhabitants look forward with eager expectation to the setting in of the rainy season, when cultivation

What was formerly a custom in the East? What had grown into a custom among idolatrous nations? What is said in the 72d Psalm?

commences. When the ground has been without rain nine months together, it looks like the barren sand in the deserts of Arabia, where there is not one spire of green grass to be seen : when the rainy season commences, and the fat enriching showers begin to fall, the face of the earth, as it were by a new resurrection, is so revived, and so renewed, that it is presently covered all over with a pure green mantle ; so rapid is the progress of vegetation."

"Well, father, do explain some more passages."

"In the seventy-fifth Psalm, the writer says to the wicked, 'Lift not up your horn on high, and speak not with a stiff neck.' No doubt but this is intended as a rebuke to pride and ambition. And here is an obvious reference to the customs of the East. Bruce, speaking of the head-dress of the governors of the provinces of Abyssinia, represents it as consisting of a large broad fillet bound upon the forehead, and tied behind the head. In the middle of this was a horn, or a conical piece of silver gilt, about four inches long, much in the shape of our common candle extinguishers. This is called a horn, and is only worn at reviews, or parades after victory. The crooked manner

What do travellers tell us of vegetation in the East ? What is said in the 75th Psalm ? What does Bruce say of Eastern dress ?

in which they hold the neck, when this ornament is on their forehead, for fear it should fall forward, seems to agree with what the Psalmist calls, 'speaking with a stiff neck,' of which phrase it shows the meaning, when you hold the horn on high like the horn of an unicorn.

"The celebrated William Penn gives the following account of his interview with the American Indians when he purchased the land for his province of Pennsylvania; it will help to illustrate the subject. One of the chiefs,' says he, 'put on his head a kind of chaplet, in which appeared a small horn. This, as among the primitive Eastern nations, and according to Scripture language, was an emblem of kingly power; and whenever the chief, who had a right to wear it, put it on, it was understood that the peace was made sacred, and the persons of all present inviolable. Upon putting on this horn, the Indians threw down their bows and arrows, and seated themselves round their chiefs in the form of a half-moon, upon the ground. The chiefs then announced to William Penn, by means of an interpreter, that the nations were ready to hear him.'"

Repeat William Penn's description of his interview with the American Indians.

“What did Solomon mean, father, where he says, that ‘ointment and perfume rejoice the heart?’”

“Doubtless he meant, they were very agreeable and refreshing. This is a very general opinion in the East. Almost all their apartments are filled with fragrance. ‘Towards the conclusion of a visit,’ says Savary, ‘in Egypt, a silver plate, on which are burning precious spices, approaches the faces of the visitors, each of whom in his turn perfumes his beard. They then pour rose-water on the head and hands. This is the last ceremony; after which it is usual to withdraw.’”

“‘At my taking leave of a chief in India,’ says Lord Valentia, ‘the usual compliments passed, rose-water was presented, and our chins were perfumed with frankincense.’”

“Fragrant wood is often burnt in the houses of the East, in order to scent the apartments. Aloes wood is often used for this purpose. Maundrell tells us, that it is put into a small silver chafing-dish, covered with a lid full of holes, and fixed upon a handsome plate. In this they put some fresh coals, and upon them a piece of lignum aloes; and then, shutting it up, the smoke

Why is it said that ointment and perfume rejoice the heart? What does Savary say of an eastern visit? What does Lord Valentia say? What are often burnt in the East?

immediately ascends with a grateful odour through the cover. It is not improbable that Solomon had reference to some such custom prevalent in his day.

“ Thus, you see, Harry, that the more the sacred Scriptures are examined, the more excellent they appear. It is also evident, that, by an actual reference to the usages of the countries in which the facts recorded transpired, they may be explained and illustrated in a very striking and instructive manner. We have only to glance at the most admirable productions of the greatest men among the heathen nations,—such as the works of Homer, or Virgil, or Horace, to see that they, or any of our race, were absolutely incapable of inventing any volume at all resembling the Scriptures. But can you repeat Dryden’s admirable lines on this subject ?”

‘ Whence but from Heaven should men, unskill’d in arts,
In different ages born, in different parts,
Weave such agreeing truths ? Or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie ?
Unask’d their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gains, and martyrdom their price.’

What does Maundrell tell us ? How may we easily understand the Scriptures ? What have we only to do ? Repeat some lines from Dryden.

THE END.

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